

THEATRE
OF
EDUCATION.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH
OF
THE COUNTESS DE GENLIS.

Leçon commence, Exemple achevé.

LA MOTTE, *Fable de L'Aigle et L'Aiglon.*

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

V O L. IV.

D U B L I N:

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P R E F A C E.

A Great many books have been written upon education, but the Authors of all those different works, have hitherto dedicated their labours to the service of only one rank of life: The general principles of virtue and morality, are certainly proper for all degrees of men, but

however, every condition ought to have its particular precepts, and every individual should endeavour to acquire those qualities, which can render him eminent in his station.

This Volume is intended solely for the education of the children of Shopkeepers and Mechanics ; but people even of a lower rank, may find useful instruction in it : the lady's maid, young milliners, mantua-makers, and shopwomen, will here see a particular detail of their duties. They

P R E F A C E. v

will find reduced to action, one truth with which it were to be wished they may be struck : it is, that the most certain means of succeeding in life, is to be honest ; and that self-interest, well understood, advises us to follow that rule of conduct which is prescribed and cherished by virtue,

It is in the power of the honest man to dignify that rank of life, whatever it may be, in which it has pleased Heaven to

vi P R E F A C E.

place him ; let him learn its duties, and discharge them worthily ; and in the eye of reason, he must be an object deserving of regard, esteem, and veneration.

The Author has spared no pains to become minutely acquainted with that class of citizens, for whom this volume is intended ; and this study has only served to add to her desire of dedicating a part of her labours to their service. In this

P R E F A C E. vii

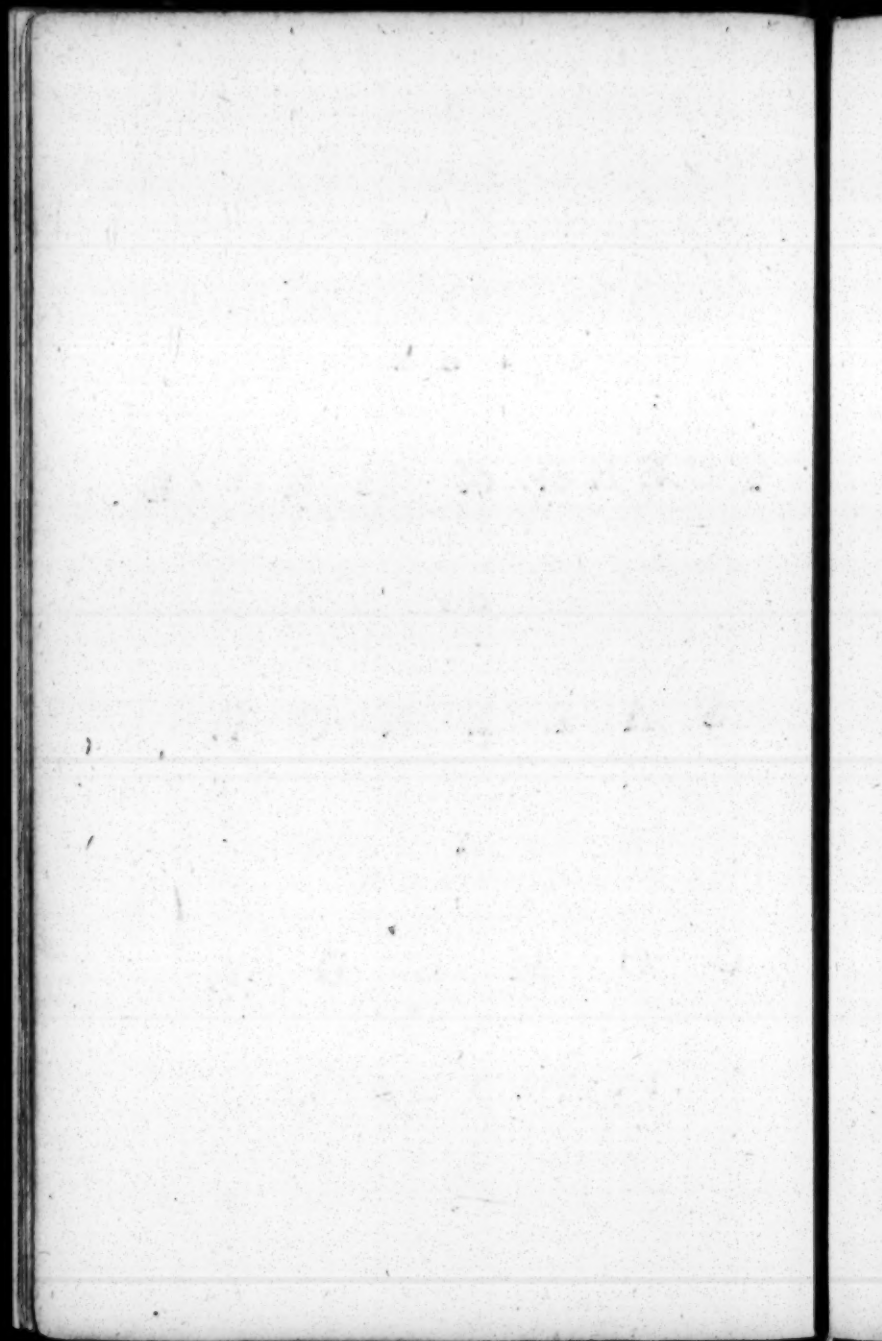
sphere of life, generally speaking, are to be found, piety, pure morals, and the most affectionate union in families; and the Author, with great truth may add, that the virtuous persons, introduced in these little pieces, are not imaginary characters, but really exist, and are here represented without the least exaggeration.

May this Volume be read by those worthy Citizens for whom it was intended; may it employ the leisure moments of

viii P R E F A C E.

those good mothers, who love their children! May it be found, not in a great library, but upon the counter; it will then meet with the fate and success the Author wishes, and the only purpose at which she aimed, will be fully accomplished.

THE
QUEEN of the ROSE
OF
SALENCY.
A
COMEDY,
IN TWO ACTS.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author imagines that some particulars about Salency, and the respectable institution of the Festival of the Rose, will be read with pleasure; and it is impossible to gratify the Reader's curiosity on that subject in a more interesting manner, than by copying a Memorial written in favour of the institution, which appeared in 1774, signed

12 ADVERTISEMENT.

by M. TARGET, Counsellor, and
M. TARGET, Attorney, and from
which the Author has taken
every thing that relates to the
Queen of the Rose and the Sa-
lencians.

“ There is still a part of the
“ world where simple genuine
“ virtue receives public ho-
“ nours. It is in a village of
“ Picardie, a place far distant
“ from the politeness and luxury
“ of great Cities. There, an
“ affecting ceremony, which
“ draws tears from the spectators,
“ a solemnity, awful from its ve-
“ nerable antiquity, and salutary
“ influence, has been preserved
“ notwithstanding the revoluti-
“ ons of twelve centuries; there,
“ the simple lustre of the flow-
“ ers with which innocence is
“ annually crowned, is at once
“ the reward, the encourage-

“ ment, and the emblem. Here,
 “ indeed, ambition preys upon
 “ the young heart, but it is a
 “ gentle ambition: the prize is
 “ a hat, decorated with roses.
 “ The preparations for a public
 “ decision, and pomp of the
 “ festival, the concourse of peo-
 “ ple which it assembles, their
 “ attention fixed upon modesty,
 “ which does itself honour by
 “ its blushes, the simplicity of
 “ the reward, an emblem of
 “ those virtues by which it is ob-
 “ tained, the affectionate friend-
 “ ship of the rivals, who, in
 “ heightening the triumph of
 “ their queen, conceal in the
 “ bottom of their worthy hearts,
 “ the timid hope of reigning in
 “ their turn: all these circum-
 “ stances united, give a pleas-
 “ ing and affecting pomp to this
 “ singular ceremony, which
 VOL. IV. B

14 ADVERTISEMENT.

“ makes every eye to sparkle
“ with tears of new delight, and
“ makes wisdom the object of
“ passion. To be irreproachable
“ is not sufficient, there is a
“ kind of nobleness, of which
“ proofs are required; a noble-
“ ness, not of rank and dig-
“ nity, but of worth and inno-
“ cence. These proofs must in-
“ clude several generations, both
“ on the father and mother’s
“ side; so that a whole family
“ is crowned upon the head of
“ one; the triumph of one, is
“ the glory of the whole; and
“ the old man in grey hairs, who
“ sheds tears of sensibility on the
“ victory gained by the daugh-
“ ter of his son, placed by her
“ side, receives, in effect, the
“ reward of sixty years, spent
“ in a life of virtue.

“ By this means, emulation
 “ becomes general, for the ho-
 “ nour of the whole ; every one
 “ dreads, by an indelicate ac-
 “ tion, to dethrone either his
 “ sister or his daughter. The
 “ Crown of Roses, promised to
 “ the most prudent, is expected
 “ with emotion, distributed with
 “ justice, and establishes good-
 “ ness, rectitude, and morality,
 “ in every family ; it attaches
 “ the best people to the most
 “ peaceful residence.

“ Example, powerful exam-
 “ ple, acts even at a distance ;
 “ there, the bud of worthy ac-
 “ tions is unfolded, and the
 “ traveller, in approaching this
 “ territory, perceives, before he
 “ enters it, that he is not far
 “ from Salency. In the course

16 ADVERTISEMENT.

“ of so many successive ages, all
“ round them has changed; they
“ alone will hand down to their
“ children, the pure inheritance
“ they received from their fa-
“ thers: an institution truly
“ great, from its simplicity;
“ powerful, under an appear-
“ ance of weakness; such is
“ the almost unknown influence
“ of honours; such is the
“ strength of that easy spring,
“ by which all men may be go-
“ verned: sow honour, and
“ you will reap virtue.

“ If we reflect upon the time
“ the Salencians have celebrat-
“ ed this Festival, it is the most
“ ancient ceremony existing. If
“ we attend to its object, it is,
“ perhaps, the only one which
“ is dedicated to the service of
“ virtue. If virtue is the most

ADVERTISEMENT. 17

“ useful, and estimable advantage to society in general, this
“ establishment, by which it is
“ encouraged, is a public national benefit, and belongs to
“ France.—

“ According to a tradition,
“ handed down from age to
“ age, Saint Medard, born at
“ Salency; proprietor, rather
“ than lord, of the territory of
“ Salency, (for there were no
“ fiefs at that time) was the
“ institutor of that charming
“ festival, which has made virtue flourish for so many ages.
“ He had himself the pleasing
“ consolation of enjoying the
“ fruit of his wisdom, and his
“ family was honoured with the
“ prize which he had instituted,
“ for his Sister obtained the
“ Crown of Roses.

18 ADVERTISEMENT.

“ This affecting, and valuable Festival, has been handed down from the fifth century to the present day. To this Rose is attached a purity of morals, which, from time immemorial, has never suffered the slightest blemish; to this Rose are attached the happiness, peace, and glory of the Salencians.

“ This Rose is the portion, frequently the only portion which virtue brings with it; this Rose forms the amiable and pleasing tie of a happy marriage. Even fortune is anxious to obtain it, and comes with respect, to receive it from the hand of honourable indigence. A possession of twelve hundred years, and

ADVERTISEMENT. 19

“ such splendid advantages, is
“ the fairest title that exists in
“ the world.

“ An important period for
“ the Festival of the Rose, was,
“ when Louis the thirteenth
“ sent the Marquis de Gordes,
“ the Captain of his guards,
“ from the castle of Varennes
“ to Salency, with a blue rib-
“ bon, and a silver ring, to be
“ presented from him to the
“ Queen of the Rose. It is
“ from that honourable epocha
“ that a blue ribbon, flowing
“ in streamers, furrounds the
“ crown of Roses; that a ring
“ is fastened to it, and the
“ young girls of her train, wear
“ over their white robes, a blue
“ ribbon, in the manner of a
“ scarf.

“ In 1766, Mr. Morfontaine
 “ settled a yearly income of one
 “ hundred and twenty livres
 “ upon the girl then elected
 “ Queen. This income to be
 “ enjoyed by her during life,
 “ and, after her death, each
 “ succeeding girl, who should
 “ be crowned Queen, to have
 “ one year's income on the day
 “ of her election. This noble
 “ generosity can only be re-
 “ warded by the homage of the
 “ public, and honour alone is
 “ the worthy recompence.

“ Some days before the feast
 “ of Saint Medard, the inha-
 “ bitants assemble in presence
 “ of the officers of Justice, where
 “ this worthy company delibe-
 “ rate upon the important bu-
 “ siness of making a choice; in

ADVERTISEMENT. 21

“ doing which, they have no
“ object in view but equity.
“ They know all the merits
“ that give a title to the crown ;
“ they are acquainted with all
“ the domestic details of their
“ peaceful village ; they have
“ not, nor can have, any
“ other intention, but to be
“ just : enthusiasm and respect
“ for the memory of the holy
“ Institutor, and the excellence
“ of the institution, are still in
“ full force among them. They
“ name three girls, three virtu-
“ ous Salencians ; of the most
“ esteemed and respectable fa-
“ milies.—

“ The nomination is imme-
“ diately carried to the Lord of
“ Salency, or to the person ap-
“ pointed to represent him,
“ who is free to decide between

22 ADVERTISEMENT.

“ the three girls, but obliged
“ to choose one of them, whom
“ he proclaims Queen of the
“ year.

“ Eight days before the cere-
“ mony, the name of the suc-
“ cessful candidate is declared
“ in Church.—

“ When the great day of the
“ festival arrives, which is al-
“ ways the eighth of June, the
“ Lord of Salency may claim
“ the honour of conducting the
“ Queen to be crowned. On
“ that grand day, she is greater
“ than all by whom she is sur-
“ rounded; and that greatness
“ is of a nature which has no-
“ thing in common with the
“ usual distinctions of rank.

“ The Lord of Salency has

“ the privilege of going to take
 “ virtue from her cottage, and
 “ lead her in triumph. Lean-
 “ ing upon his arm, or the arm
 “ of the person whom he has
 “ substituted in his place, the
 “ Queen steps forth from her
 “ simple dwelling, escorted by
 “ twelve young girls, dressed in
 “ white, with blue scarfs; and
 “ twelve youths, who wear the
 “ livery of the Queen; she is
 “ preceded by music and drums,
 “ which announce the begin-
 “ ning of the procession:
 “ she passes along the streets
 “ of the village, between rows
 “ of spectators, whom the
 “ Festival has drawn to Salen-
 “ cy, from the distance of four
 “ leagues. The public admire
 “ and applaud her; the mothers
 “ shed tears of joy, the old men
 “ renew their strength to fol-
 “ low their beloved Queen, and

24 A D V E R T I S E M E N T .

“ compare her with those whom
“ they have seen in their youth.
“ The Salencians are proud of
“ the merits of her to whom
“ they give the crown; she is
“ one of themselves, she belongs
“ to them, she reigns by their
“ choice, she reigns alone, and
“ is the only object of atten-
“ tion.

“ The Queen, being arrived
“ at the Church, the place ap-
“ pointed for her is always in
“ the midst of the people, the
“ only situation that could do her
“ honour; where she is, there
“ is no longer any distinction of
“ rank, it all vanishes in the
“ presence of virtue. A pew,
“ placed in the middle of the
“ Choir, in sight of all the peo-
“ ple, is prepared to receive her :
“ her train range themselves in

ADVERTISEMENT. 25

“ two lines by her side ; she is
“ the only object of the day,
“ all eyes remain fixed upon
“ her, and her triumph conti-
“ nues.

“ After Vespers the proces-
“ sion begins again ; the Clergy
“ lead the way, the Lord of
“ Salency receives her hand,
“ her train join, the people fol-
“ low and line the streets, while
“ some of the inhabitants, un-
“ der arms, support the two
“ rows, offering their homage
“ by the loudest acclamations,
“ until she arrives at the Chapel
“ of St. Medard, where the
“ gates are kept open : the good
“ Salencians do not forsake their
“ Queen at the instant when
“ the reward of virtue is going
“ to be delivered ; it is at that
“ moment in particular, that it
Vol. IV. C

“ is pleasing to see her, and ho-
“ nourable for her to be seen.

“ The officiating Clergyman
“ blesses the Hat, decorated
“ with Roses, and its other or-
“ naments; then turning to-
“ wards the assembly, he pro-
“ nounces a discourse on the
“ subject of the Festival. What
“ an affecting gravity, what an
“ awful impression does the lan-
“ guage of the Priest (who in
“ such a moment celebrates the
“ praises of Wisdom,) make
“ upon the minds of his hear-
“ ers! He holds the Crown in
“ his hand, while Virtue waits
“ kneeling at his feet; all the
“ spectators are affected, tears
“ in every eye, persuasion in
“ every heart; then is the mo-
“ ment of lasting impressions;

“ and that instant he places the
“ crown upon her head.

“ After this begins a *Te*
“ *Deum*, during which the pro-
“ cession is resumed.

“ The Queen, with the crown
“ upon her head, and attended
“ in the same manner as she was
“ going to receive it, returns
“ the way she came; her tri-
“ umph still increasing as she
“ passes along, till she again
“ enters the Church, and occu-
“ pies the same place in the
“ middle of the Choir, till the
“ end of the service.

“ She has now homage to re-
“ ceive, and, going forth, is
“ attended to a particular piece

28 ADVERTISEMENT.

“ of ground, where crowned
“ Innocence finds expecting vaf-
“ fals prepared to offer her pre-
“ sents. They are simple gifts,
“ but their singularity proves
“ the antiquities of the custom;
“ a nosegay of flowers, a dart,
“ two balls, &c. &c.

“ From thence she is con-
“ ducted, with the same pomp,
“ and led back to her relations,
“ and, in her own house, if she
“ thinks proper, gives a rural
“ collation to her conductor and
“ her retinue.

“ This Festival is of a singular
“ kind, of which there is no
“ model elsewhere. It is in-
“ tended to encourage wisdom,
“ by bestowing public honours,
“ and for such a purpose they

ADVERTISEMENT. 29

“ ought to be boundless. Where
“ virtue reigns there is no ri-
“ val, and whoever wishes
“ for distinction in her pre-
“ sence, can not be sufficiently
“ sensible of what is due to
“ her triumph.

“ The distinguishing charac-
“ teristic of this Festival is, that
“ every part of it is referable
“ to the Queen, that every
“ thing is eclipsed by her pre-
“ sence; her splendor is direct,
“ not reflected; her glory bor-
“ rows nothing from distinction
“ of ranks; she has no need
“ of any one to make her
“ great and respectable; in
“ one word, it is the image of
“ virtue which shines, and
“ every thing disappears be-
“ fore her.

“ The Pastor * is as respectable
 “ as his flock is pure. By
 “ shewing himself the protector
 “ of a Festival which preserves
 “ the morals of the people from
 “ the general contagion, he performs
 “ the only character that
 “ is suitable to him. It is
 “ pleasing to have men to govern,
 “ who are upright, simple,
 “ and industrious; happy
 “ in their mediocrity, peaceable
 “ in their mutual dealings,
 “ of whom there is no example
 “ of *a single person* having been
 “ carried before a magistrate;
 “ men, whose purity has never
 “ been stained by a crime, ne-

* Mr. Sauvel, the Prior of Salency, by his
 morals, his virtues, and his truly paternal
 love of his Parishioners, is highly deserving
 of this encomium.

ADVERTISEMENT. 31

“ ver debased by a single con-
“ demnation ; men, whose hum-
“ ble dwellings offer to view,
“ in the bosom of active in-
“ digence, the virtues of both
“ the sexes united for the com-
“ mon happiness.”



THE PERSONS.

THE LORD OF SALENCY.

THE PRIOR OF SALENCY.

MONICA, an old Peasant of Salency.

GERTRUDE, daughter of Monica.

HELEN, daughter of Gertrude, named a
Candidate for the Crown of Roses.

THERESA, } named Candidates for the
URSULA, } Crown.

BASIL, the son of Gertrude.

MARGERY, a neighbour of Gertrude's.

MRS. DUMMER, the wife of a Grocer in
the town of Noyon.

MARY, daughter of Mrs. Dummer.

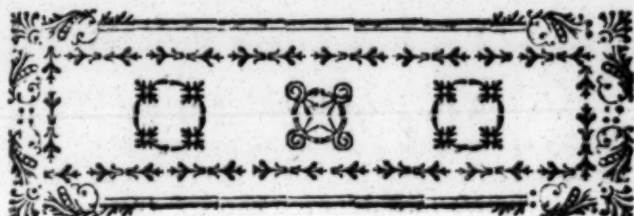
THE BAILIFF, a silent person.

Companies of young Salencian girls, musicians, &c.

The three Candidates should be cloathed in
white, with their hair hanging loose.

The Scene is at Salency.





- THE
QUEEN of the ROSE
OF
SALENCY.
A
COMEDY.

La vertu sous la chaume attire nos hommages;
CARDINAL DE BERNIS.

A C T I.

S C E N E I.

The Stage represents a large chamber in the
house of a peasant, with a press on one side.

MARGERY, HELEN.

MARGERY.

WELL, thank God, however, I have got
back to the Festival.

HEL. You have been a great while at Noyon ?

MAR. Yes, indeed, owing to my Uncle's illness : but now he is almost recovered ; says he to me, Margery, this is the eighth of June, go your ways to Salency, and see the coronation, and come back to-morrow——Upon which, by my faith, I immediately set out, and, by good luck, I fell in with a lady, the wife of a great Grocer in the Town, who was likewise coming to the Coronation, and she brought me along with her. Egad she is a brave woman : she made me prate to her all the way as we came along, about Salency, and the Queens of the Rose.——She is come to lodge at the Prior's, with her little daughter Miss Mary, a bold little girl ; ah, marry, if you was but to see her, she is but seven years old——she has a great spirit, tho' she is not very big.——But, tell me, Helen, you are one of the Candidates, are not you ?

HEL. Yes, I have been named these eight days, with Ursula and Theresa.

MAR. O, I'll lay a wager you will get the Crown.

HEL *. Why so ? Ursula and Theresa are such good girls——O, I assure you I shall

* In the original, the characters being Peasants, they speak the dialect of the province where Salency is situated. If the Translator

not be vexed if either the one or the other gets the Rose.——Theresa especially, I love her so dearly ! You know, Margery, that we have always been like two sisters.

MAR. Theresa is a very pretty girl, very gentle, obliging, and well brought up ; but for all that, you are better than she ; there is but one opinion on that head——And then your mother, she has had the Rose in her

thought himself equal to the task, he would not, for the most evident reason, attempt to give the dialect of a French province in the dialect of any particular county in England, but hopes to convey the sense of the Author, in language equally intelligible to the whole kingdom.

The Author, in this place, informs us, in a note, that the language of the candidates for the crown of Roses, is not so vulgar as that of the rest of the inhabitants, which is owing to the notice taken of them by the ladies of the family of the Lord of Salency ; that communication absolutely freeing them from the rustic manners of the peasants. She adds, that they who have gained the Crown, or those who are destined, by the general voice, to obtain it, may easily be known by their language and manners ; and besides, that in general, all the inhabitants of Salency, are as much distinguished from other peasants by their language and manners, as they are by their morals and virtues.

time, and your grandmother, Monica, has likewise been crowned; all that tells, and marry it is but right it should.——To be sure there is not a more deserving family than yours to be found in all Salency.——Your deceased father was a most worthy man!——By the by, I'll engage your brother Basil is not a little pleased that Theresa is a candidate; tho' she should not get the rose, it is always a great honour to be named one of the three: it is as much as to say, she will have it in a couple of years from this time. Basil loves Theresa, but your mother won't hear reason on that head; she has said to me more than a hundred times, none but a Queen of the Rose shall have my boy; she sticks to her purpose.——Ah, you have a head of your own, neighbour Gertrude.——She is a notable woman.——But, tell me, Helen, is your mother gone out?

HEL. Yes, she is gone to the Prior.

MAX. Why truly, the Prior * and the Bailiff, being the judges of the candidates for the Rose, they must hear what every one has to say——My God, I think I hear Gertrude

* The Prior being best acquainted with the conduct of the young girls, by the account he gives, contributes more than any one to the coronation. The lord of Salency names the Queen, but that depends upon the depositions given to the Prior and Bailiff.

at this moment, how she is prating, I warrant you, of all the fine things she has to say on your account——Helen did this, and Helen did that——O, I see her from hence——She won't forget to tell all the particulars of your behaviour to your grandmother Monica, with what care you have watched and attended her.——

HEL. No, no, my mother won't speak of any such thing; what is there in that to boast of?——Is it possible any one could do otherwise? When one has a grandmother, is it not natural to love her, and be careful of her, and perhaps——

MAR. Ah, no doubt; but, however, there is not a girl in Salency more respectful to her grandmother than you have been to Monica——for you have never been seen a holiday-making, nor dancing in the Great Square on Sundays, and all to stay at home with Monica; and yet you love dancing very well, and are only seventeen. Marry, at your age it is very edifying.——it must give pleasure to every body——it well deserves the Rose——And I too will go presently to the Prior, and give in my deposition as well as the rest; I will tell him all I have in my heart——and all the fine things I know of you.

HEL. Dear neighbour, I pray you speak to him of Theresa.

MAR. God forgive me, one would almost think you would be sorry to have the Crown.

HEL. Ah, Margery, surely I wish for it more than any one, and you cannot conceive how my heart beats, when I think that perhaps I shall have it this very day.——I have not shut my eyes these eight days.——I say to myself, O what joy will be in our house, if I get the crown!——what satisfaction for my mother——and my poor grandmother, what will she say?——it will make her twenty years younger!——O Lord, how happy shall I be!——And my brother, and my godmother, and my cousin Felix! how they will all rejoice——and you may depend upon it, Margery, so will Theresa, for, though she is a candidate, she will see me crowned with pleasure——nor will Ursula envy me; so that you see with what reason I should wish for the Rose, since my happiness will give pain to nobody, and will be such satisfaction to all my family.

MAR. Without reckoning on a husband within the year——Eh, you need not blush: you very well know, that when a girl is crowned, it is as much as to say, who shall have her; and all the young men in the village strive who shall get her: the best portion in this place is the crown of Roses; and by my faith, it is but natural, that she who is the most prudent should be most beloved. The men would be very great fools if they did not think so. But I believe I hear my neighbour coming.

HEL. Yes, it is my mother——

SCENE II.

GERTRUDE, MARGERY, HELEN.

MAR. [to Gertrude] Good day, neighbour——

GER. Ha, gossip Margery!——how long have you been come back?

MAR. I am come to see Helen crowned——

GER. Ah, Margery, what a day is this!
——It is twenty years, this very day, since I was crowned; I remember it as if it was but yesterday; how I trembled, and how anxious I was; till the very moment of the declaration, I was as stupid as a block——but all that is nothing to the anguish of a poor mother, who wishes the crown for her daughter!——It seems to me, that I shall receive a thousand times more honour by the crowning of this dear child, than I had by my own. Ah, if you knew how many pints of bad blood I have made within this fortnight, but more especially since yesterday!
——Ah, Margery, none but a mother can conceive this——

MAR. However, about six weeks ago, you told me you was as good as certain that Helen would have the Rose.

D 2

GER. I was wrong to say so ; there are so many girls in Salency as good as Helen !—— God Almighty punishes the proud, Margery ; that is a terrible thought.——In short, the nearer the time approaches, the more I am fearful.

MAR. Did you find the Prior ?

GER. No, he was not at home——but I shall go again.

MAR. 'Tis is a busy day with him.

GER. That it is, I promise you.

MAR. Marry, he is Judge, and that makes him anxious.

GER. Then, he is so conscientious !—— And, besides, he loves us all as if we were his own children !

MAR. They would give all the gold in Peru, that he would never leave Salency.

GER. O, that is very certain——The dear worthy man——May heaven preserve him to us.——But, Helen, tell me, where is my mother ?

HEL. She is in bed, and asleep—— she did not close her eyes all last night.

GER. She is in such anxiety about the coronation !——Ah, I wish to heaven she may not fall sick !——[Turning round] Who is that jabbering at the door ? Go and see, Helen.

HEL. [opens the door.] It is Therefa, mother.

SCENE III.

THERESA, GERTRUDE, MARGERY,
HELEN.

THER. Mrs. Gertrude, I come to let you know that the Bailiff is at home, if you choose to go there. ——— My mother and Ursula's, are gone there already.

GER. Thank you, my dear, I am just agoing.

THER. The square is already filled with strangers, and gentlemen, and fine ladies.

GER. Ah, my God! ———

MAR. I must go and see all this ———

GER. Come, gossip Margery, give me your arm, you shall conduct me to the Bailiff, for I am so agitated, I can scarcely walk; I feel as if every thing was turning round with me.

MAR. [giving her her arm] Come, come along, neighbour; I will support you.

[They go out.]

HELEN, THERESA.

THER. So, we are at last alone; I am glad of it, Helen, for I am very impatient to have some conversation with you about our adventure of last night —— I have been thinking of it again and again, ever since. — My God, how have I repented the leaving you to shift for yourself. ——— If it is known, my dear Helen, I shall be a ruined girl. —

HEL. Come, come, make yourself easy; I have promised to keep your secret, and you may depend upon it I shall not fail.

THER. Do you see, Helen, it is not that I want the Rose; all the Village expect that you are to have it, and there is not one who has a word to say to the contrary. ——— I likewise very well know that Ursula should be preferred to me, but, however, I have been named a Candidate, and, to be sure, that is a great happiness. ——— Helen, I will tell you all —— Basil! ——— In short, my mother will be very proud, if I should be married to Basil —— Basil, the son, the grandson, and the brother of Queens of the Rose, for it is certain that you are going to be one; but if this unlucky affair is known, all will be over with me; I shall be struck off the list

of candidates, and excluded for ever from the Rose!——it would kill my mother, and me too, Helen——To think of it only, makes my blood run cold!

HEL. Excluded from the Rose!——do not say so, Theresa, it is dreadful to hear it mentioned——And, after all, what is your crime?——you was fearful, you was tired, there was a long way to go, and you durst not venture to return through the wood, when it was dark as pitch——that is all——

THER. And the worthy action I left you to do alone!——but you had the courage to take the poor old woman all the way home to Chauni!——I am very sorry, however, Helen, that this is not known, for your sake; but, thank God, it is not necessary for your gaining the Rose——O Lord, when I think that you was obliged to come back thro' the wood after it was dark night!——

HEL. I was very much afraid when I was there; and all gossip Margery's stories of spirits came into my mind!——I had not a drop of blood in my veins!——

THER. And then there is old goody Magdalen, who died last Saturday, that used to go there to gather leaves.

HEL. She came in my head more than twenty times——

THER. However, you did not hear any thing?

HEL. To be sure, every now and then I heard a noise of leaves!—Fri, frou, fri, frou, all about my ears!—

THER. O Lord!—that fri, frou—

HEL. Just like one gathering leaves.

THER. Lack-a-day!—it was the soul of poor Magdalen—However, you was very happy that you did not see her—Nancy and her mother were talking of her, the night before last—

HEL. Yes, I remember it very well — They saw her in the shape of a great white sheep.

THER. Yes, a sheep as large as a calf, as Nancy told me——For my part, I should have died with fear.——But, tell me, at what o'clock did you get home? What did your mother say?

HEL. Ah, Theresa, that you might not suffer, I told a lie, for the first time in my life——That is what it cost me. I got home by nine o'clock; my mother was quite benumbed with fear; and why so late, Helen, says she? And why have you come home without leaves? And where is Theresa? All these questions confounded me; but I answered her as we had agreed: Mother, said I, I left Theresa hard by; my ass fell into a ditch, and we were, I don't know how long, before we could get him out; and likewise some other reasons. I was very glad to find my mother believed this; yet, after all, I was uneasy to see her give into it.—It went so to my heart, Theresa, that I could not help

THE ROSE.

crying.———And, pray, how did you manage?

THEA. I returned by the little path at the back of the village, which is so full of nettles that nobody passes that way, and got home to our house by leaping over the garden hedge, that no one might see me; then I hid myself in our barn till it was night, where I was as much afraid, as if I had been in the wood; there I thought of you, I repented having left you, and O how I sobbed and cried.———

I said to myself, if I had had more courage, I would have been with Helen, and we should both have returned to the village, holding up our heads, and proud of what had happened!

———And, instead of that, Helen must conceal her worthy action, that she may conceal my fault.———And I cried, God knows how bitterly I cried!———At last, when it was night, I went out again thro' the garden, and returning home along the Village, told my mother the same story you told yours.

HEL. Nobody saw us come back separately, and the good woman of Chauni does not know our names, so that our adventure can never be discovered; and I swear to you again, my dear Theresa, that, as long as I live, I will never open my lips about it, let what will happen.

THEA. [embracing her] O, Helen! how I love you!———

HEL. Come, come, you do not love one that is ungrateful!———But I think I hear a knock at the door.———[She cries] Coming, coming.———

THEER. God forgive me, it is certainly the Prior's voice!——yes, indeed, it is he——and the lady from Noyon, the Grocer's wife that brought Margery along with her.

SCENE V.

The PRIOR, Mrs. DUMMER, MARY,
HELEN, THERESA.

HEL. My God, how unlucky, my mother is gone out!

PRI. Good day, Helen; this is Mrs. Dummer, who is come from Noyon, to see the Festival.

Mrs. DUM. And to get acquainted with the Candidates.

PRI. These are two of them.

Mrs. DUM. I must embrace them; what charming girls——[Helen and Theresa courtesy.]

HEL. I pray you, Theresa, go and see if you can find my mother——

THER. I run. [She goes out]

MARY [pointing to Helen]. Mama, is not this she that is to be the Queen of the Rose?

HEL. O, Miss, sure I am not the most deserving.

MARY. O, Mama, beg Mr. Prior to give her the Rose——

Mrs. DUM. Yes, yes, to be sure that will do the business.

MARY. Marry, however, she is the prettiest, and by much the fairest : the rest are as black as any thing.

Mrs. DUM. But hearkee, Mary, you do not love little Dido, our neighbour's daughter ?

MARY. No, indeed, she always scratches me, I don't love her at all.

Mrs. DUM. However, she is very pretty, and very fair.——

MARY. But she is as wicked, as I don't know what——

Mrs. DUM. It is then much better to be good, than to be pretty.

MARY. But can't one be pretty without scratching ?

Mrs. DUM. Yes, sure. But beauty goes off, and goodness lasts : besides, it is by being good, that a little girl makes her papa and mama pleased with her ; it is goodness that makes her loved ; you plainly see then, it is by that alone she can deserve to be rewarded.

MARY. O yes, that is but right, I shall remember it. So then, Mama, she that is the best girl, is to be the Queen.

Mrs. DUM. Certainly. But, Mr. Prior, you promised me, that in this house you would shew me the greatest curiosity in Salency.

PRI. That is true. Well, see here, look at this Press; ——— it contains some very valuable riches ———

Mrs. DUM. What is it?

MARY. O, I wish they would open it.

PRI. Helen, can we have the key?

HEL. I will go and see if my grandmother will give it me.

MARY. Mama, will you give me leave to go with her?

Mrs. DUM. Yes, yes, go along. [Helen takes Mary by the hand, and goes out.]

PRI. This Family, Mrs. Dummer, is, in fact, one of the most considerable in Salency; if you knew the piety and charity of these people! ——— and how they are respected by all the village! ——— for here, it is virtue only that impresses with respect.

Mrs. DUM. You are very happy, Mr. Prior, to have the care of such good souls.

PRI. I express my thanks to heaven for it every day of my life. Only think, Mrs. Dummer, that during the twenty years I have lived here, I have not seen one bad action committed; I have not known one dishonest man!-----To give you an idea of the purity of their manners and morals, I must acquaint you with the reason for their having refused the Rose last year to a young girl. She was perfectly prudent and modest, indeed there is no instance of one being otherwise here; but some witnesses deposed, and indeed it was proved, that she had passed almost a whole working day in idleness, and her bro-

ther had ridiculed an old man: and she was unanimously excluded.

Mrs. DUM. So the faults of relations are likewise taken into the account?

PRI. Yes, truly, which is the cause of the Rose keeping the boys, as well as the girls, in awe; you will evidently see, that the fathers and brothers must be attentive to their own conduct——For instance, that very young man, I just now mentioned to you, who contributed to the exclusion of his sister, was just on the eve of being married, and upon this, the relations of the girl broke off the march.

Mrs. DUM. O, I understand you; so the Queen of the Rose procures honour to the whole family——

PRI. Certainly; every individual is flattered with the thought of having contributed something to the gaining of the Crown.

Mrs. DUM. But there is one circumstance which perplexes me; are they Salencians who depose against the Candidates?

PRI. Yes.——

Mrs. DUM. Does not that occasion resentment and hatred among them?

PRI. By no means. Without the most positive proofs no deposition would be received; it is neither envy nor aversion that depose, but a noble desire that the Rose may not fall to the share of a person whose merit is doubtful.——The desire of honours and riches, frequently occasion odious crimes and cabals; but this Rose, this simple, rural prize, offered to virtue, can only inspire a

laudable emulation, and serve still more to purify those innocent hearts that burn with zeal to obtain it. But I hear Helen coming.

—— Ha, the worthy Monica, her old grandmother, is with her.

S C E N E VI.

The PRIOR, MRS. DUMMER, MARY, MONICA, HELEN, THERESA.

[Monica supported by Helen, who has hold of Mary by the hand on the other side.]

PRI. Good day, Mother Monica; how do you do?

MON. Thank you, Mr. Prior, e'en but so so.——Marry, by next Louis's day, I shall be four-score, and that is age to make one feel; my limbs fail me, and I can scarce walk.

Mrs. DUM. Set a chair for her.

MON. Thank you, Madam, I will e'en sit down then with your good leave. [Helen places a chair near the pres. Monica sits down.]

PRI. Mother Monica, we sent Helen to beg the key of your pres.

MON. Why, truly, I don't give the key of our treasure so readily to such young folks;

it will be time enough when she is Queen of the Rose, if it please God that I live to see that day; but I have brought you the key; here it is, Mr. Prior.

PRI.* Now, Mrs. Dummer, you shall see the fairest family-titles that exist in the world; look here.

Mrs. DUM. [looking into the press.] Ha! what is that under all these little niches of glass?

PRI. Dried Crowns of Roses.

MON. O yes, they are dry, for some of them have been there much more than a hundred years!

MARY. O, Mama, it is pretty——they are just like a shrine for relics.

PRI. Well, Mrs. Dummer, you don't say any thing.

Mrs. DUM. I am quite confounded!——How is this! Have there been as many Queens of the Rose in this family, as I see Crowns here?

MON. Ah, Madam, there are many more; I had another daughter, who is dead, who had a number of daughters; all the Crowns of that side of the house are wanting; and then, my father married again, and his children, as was but right, have inherited some

* These particulars are not invented, they are perfectly true, as well all that is said in this piece relating to the manners and customs of the Salencians.

of the Crowns; we have only those of the direct line.

Mrs. DUM. [still looking in the press.]
They all have labels.

PRI. Yes, the names of the Queens are written upon these labels.

MON. Mr. Prior, you, who know all this as well as your Pater-noster, shew Madam the Crown of Mary-Jean Botard; it is the oldest, I believe.

PRI. Is it not at the top of the press?

MON. Yes. Can you reach it?

PRI. Yes, yes, I have it. Let us see the date. [He reads.] fifteen hundred and twenty.

Mrs. DUM. [holding the Crown, which is under a glass. One thousand five hundred and twenty! —

MON. That is a valuable piece, is it not?

MARY, [looking at the Crown] What! is that a Rose? How it is changed!

MON. Helen, shew that of Catharine Javelle: it stands below——

HEL. Yes, Grandmother ——

MON. Catharine Javelle was my mother's sister, and died very young: her story is comical.

PRI. Tell it us, mother Monica.

MON. You must know then, she was washing linen at the great pond; she had nobody with her but a little boy of seven years old, to carry the linen; when, all of a sudden, little Johnny—— his name was Johnny, he was the son of poor Michael.]

PRI. He is still living ; that Johnny, is now goodman Ruffel ?

MON. Just so——But, Mr. Prior, you know the whole history !

PRI. No matter, go on, mother Monica.

Mrs. DUM. I pray you do, Mrs Monica.

MON. Well then—I forget where I left off——

HEL. Grandmother, you was at, when all of a sudden, and at the brink of the pond.

MON. Ay——behold, all of a sudden, Johnny fell into the pond head foremost, flounce, there he was in the water——upon which, by my troth, my 'aunt Catharine Javelle did not make two steps of it, but threw herself headlong after him, and then fished up Johnny, like a gudgeon, and brought him safe to the shore.

Mrs. DUM. O heavens !

PRI. You must know this pond is excessively deep.

MON. O it is an abyfs——In short, she laid him upon the grass ; but Johnny had swallowed so much water, so very much, that he was in a swoon——My Aunt said to herself, what shall I do with this child, and likewise with my linen ?——It was late, she had a mile and a half to go, and nobody to help her, she was trembling, and all in confusion ; but, however, she took Johnny astraddle on her shoulders, and, leaving all her linen behind her, came back in that manner to the village.

Mrs. DUM. I hope she was Queen that year?

MON. O, my God, yes. It is an ill wind that blows nobody good, as the saying is; it is very fortunate for a young girl to find such opportunities; marry, the like don't happen every day.

Mrs. DUM. Ah, Mr. Prior, what is most curious in Salency, is not the procession of the Festival, but to see and to hear these things.

PRI. I told you so——[He looks at his watch.] But it is twelve o'clock; we must go.

Mrs. DUM. I can't take my eyes off that press.

PRI. To be sure, these respectable titles, those proofs of merit, are as valuable as the pieces of old parchment, of which some people are so vain.

Mrs. DUM. Upon my life, I could see all the parchment in the world with a dry eye, though I have some; but in looking at these dried Roses, I find the tears start!——Ah, how sorry am I that Mary is not five or six years older!——She would have been sensible of this.

MARY. Mama, you must bring me back when I grow bigger.

PRI. She is right; it is very good for a young girl to breathe the air of Salency.——Farewel, mother Monica.

MON. My God, Mr. Pprior, Gertrude will be very sorry.——

PRI. I shall return.

MON. Mr. Prior, the declaration, however, is to be at five o'clock?

PRI. Yes, mother Monica. [He takes her by the hand.] My worthy woman, be perfectly easy——I beg of you——

MON. O good Lord!——

PRI. Farewel——till by and by.

Mrs. DUM. Farewel, my dear Mrs. Monica.

MON. Your servant, Madam.

[Mrs. Dummer and the Prior go out.]

[HELEN goes to open the door for them, and makes several courtesies, which Mrs. Dummer returns, after having embraced her. In the mean time, Monica remains alone at the front of the Stage.]

MON. Mr. Prior bid me be perfectly easy; that is a good sign!——May God Almighty grant it!——[to Helen, who returns.] Helen, did you hear what Mr. Prior said?——

HEL. O God, yes, grandmother; I am still all confusion.——He took hold of your hand.——

MON. And he squeezed it, my child——I dared not to speak to him of you, because of the lady being present.——

HEL. O grandmother——I have very agreeable forebodings.!

MON. And so have I.——O Lord, I shall see you this very day, in five hours, with

the crown of Roses!——After that I shall die content.——But heark'ee, child, don't go to be vain of this; don't therefore fancy yourself better than Theresa or Ursula; that would spoil all.

HEL. Why should I be vain of it? If I am crowned, I shall owe it to you and my mother; I am only vain of being both your daughter and hers——

MON. Poor little dear!——come and kiss me——God will bless you, you deserve it.——But what is the matter!——you seem to be in tears?

HEL. It is very true——I am thinking now, that if you should flatter yourself with the hope of my getting the Crown, and unhappily I do not gain it——you will be so uneasy, so sorely vexed——

MON. Do not sob so for that.——Well, my child, if you do not get it, we must submit; that is no reason for murmuring against Providence. But the Prior bid me be perfectly easy; I promise you he did not say that for nothing.——Come, my girl, and shut the press, for you must go and get dinner ready.——Is not your brother come back yet?——

HEL. No, grandmother, he is always at the other end of the village with poor Robert, who is very sick, and knows no comfort but when Basil is with him; and my brother, who loves Robert as he does his

eyes, wishes to remain with him till the time of the ceremony.

MON. That is very right, very right, indeed. Give me my key——I hope I shall open that press this night yet, to lock up your crown in it.

HEL. O dear grandmother!

MON. Give me your arm, my girl. Come, let us go. [They go out.]

[End of the First Act.]

A C T II.

S C E N E I.

The PRIOR, GERTRUDE.

PRIOR.

YES, my dear Gertrude, I must speak with you in private.

GER. My God, Mr. Prior, you seem I don't know how——it alarms me——

PRI. I am uneasy, I own to you——

GER. You are going to acquaint me of some misfortune——

PRI. You know the singular affection I have always had for your family; I am going to tell you something which will give you great uneasiness, my dear good woman, and that distresses me exceedingly.

GER. Ah, my God—— it is something that relates to Helen?

PRI. It is so.

GER. Is it possible?—— There are depositions against her?

PRI. That is true, and—— the offence is not trifling!——

GER. Ah, Mr. Prior, they are lies——

PRI. Do not weep, my dear Gertrude; perhaps Helen will justify herself: She must have a hearing.

GER. But, pray Sir, what is said of her?

PRI. She was seen coming home last night when it was late, and alone.

GER. It is false; Therefa was with her——

PRI. No, Therefa came back by stealth about five o'clock; she concealed herself, but she was seen.

GER. Well, Mr. Prior, it is false—— it is false—— Helen—— where is she?——
[She cries with all her might] Helen, Helen—— O, here she comes.

HEL. [running] Mother——

GER. [to the Prior] Well now, I have not spoke to her in secret—— I am for no connivings—— ask her, Mr. Prior.

HEL. [aside] My God, what does my mother mean?

GER. Helen tell a lie!—— Helen!—— That is too gross an accusation to make me afraid—— since that is what is said I have no fear.

PRI. [to Helen] Come hither, child, and answer without evasion.

GER. She has no cunning, I promise you; you may depend upon it, she never boggled at telling the truth once in all her life.

HEL. [aside] I tremble——

PRI. Helen, you have hitherto been a pattern to all the girls in the village, and I still believe you have the same virtues; I am persuaded that your accusers have been deceived by some false appearances; but, in short, several witnesses have just now come separately to depose the same thing against you——

GER. You keep her upon the rack; where is the need of all this dilly dally?——Helen, they say that you came home from the wood late last night by yourself, and that Theresa hid herself.——Good God, she turns pale!——It is only surprise, Mr. Prior; I know it——I am sure of her!——

PRI. But, answer me, Helen——is the imputation false?——You have a very easy means to justify yourself; I shall tell you the names of the witnesses if you choose it, and you shall be confronted with them.

GER. Well, Helen?——

HEL. [aside.] Ah, what martyrdom?——

PRI. If the fact is true, and you deny it, think that you treat those people as slanderers, who have told nothing but the truth!

——Why these tears, why this despair, if you are innocent?

HEL. Yes, I am innocent——

GER. Well, speak then, tell your reasons.
——I begin, God forgive me, to tremble
as if my blood was freezing in my veins.
——Explain yourself, Helen.

HEL. I cannot——[Aside.] O Theresa!

GER. How is this; you cannot?——
That won't do?——She is so simple——
——Only answer me——Did you tell me
a lie last night?——[in a severe tone]
Helen!——can it be true?——No, she is
quite frightened, she is at her wit's end——
Helen, my girl, answer me; you drive me to
distraction!

HEL. O mother——I am innocent.

GER. You have told me a lie then?——
The witnesses are slanderers, are not they?—

HEL. Oh, no, no——

GER. How, wretch!——

HEL. My dear mother, if you knew!——

GER. [in a passion.] You my daughter!
——I renounce you——O Lord, why did I
not die before I saw this——[She bursts into
tears, and sinks down on a chair.]

HEL. [throwing herself at her feet.] Well,
mother, only hear me!——

GER. [pushing her away.] Let me be quiet.

PRI. [taking Gertrude by the hand.]
Poor dear woman!——

GER. Ah, Mr. Prior, have pity on us,
save the honour of a worthy family; I have a
boy; must his reputation suffer?——I shall
die!——

PRI. From the respect I have for your family, I shall suppress this adventure; the people shall not know it; I promise you that Theresa shall not be interrogated; she alone can discover all ———

HEL. [sobbing] Nothing will be discovered to my dishonour, however!——

GER. Hold your tongue, you unworthy—

PRI. Can you indeed, Helen, have the assurance to maintain that you are innocent, when you own that you have lied, that you returned alone, and sent home Theresa?

HEL. Ah, Mr. Prior, I did not send her home; she returned of her own accord; I may at least say so much.

GER. Impudence!——So the whole plot was your contrivance!——You returned after Theresa, and by night!——You have told a hundred lies!——and I must hear them with my own ears!——O my poor mother, what a dreadful fall for her!——

PRI. The hour of the declaration is at hand——

GER. The declaration!————and I was in hopes that this wretch——Ah, there is no more joy for me!——

HEL. This is too much, too much indeed; I must speak.

GER. Do not presume to come near me—

HEL. Mother, dear mother, hear me!——

GER. Insolent——[She pushes her rudely from her; Helen falls at a little distance upon her knees, and raising her hands to heaven cries:] O, my God!

GER. [in tears, runs and raises her up.]
She is hurt!—This only was wanting—

HEL. No, dear mother----but hear me----

PRI. Let us lose no more time, Gertrude;
let us go to the Bailiff's to persuade him not
to divulge this unhappy affair; the witnesses
themselves, from the respect they have for
you, will willingly contribute to the same
purpose-----

GER. Save my family; I pray you have
compassion upon us, Mr. Prior.

PRI. May this teach you to reflect, Helen;
I can perceive faults in your conduct, such as
I have never yet seen the like in Salency;
were it not for the sake of your respectable
family, you would not get off with only the
loss of the crown-----and assure yourself, that
the worthy examples you have always had be-
fore your eyes, make you still more guilty.
Come, let us be gone, my dear Ger-
trude.-----

HEL. One moment----dear mother.-----

GER. Such assurance! if you dare to move
a step, dread a mother's curse.

HEL. [sinking down on a chair.] O, I
am worn out!-----

GER. Let us go, Mr. Prior; O my God,
what a day of affliction!-----[She goes out
with the Prior.]

SCENE II.

HEL. [alone, raising herself up.] Mother!
——[She sinks down again.] My heart
sinks within me! —— She is gone! —— Per-
haps I should have told all, and Theresa
would have been ruined —— and my bro-
ther would have been distracted. —— They
love each other, they will be married; they,
at least, will be happy! —— But what will
become of me? —— I have nothing to re-
proach myself with; that thought will sup-
port me! —— My greatest grief is the vex-
ation of my mother! —— Twenty times I
had a mind to confess the truth to her, ——
but I promised Theresa to keep the secret!
—— yet to see my mother so dreadfully
enraged against me, pierced me to the heart
—— the thought of it even makes me
shudder! —— O, how dreadful is the an-
ger of a mother! And what must it be, when
one deserves it? —— My mother ——
from whom, till now, I never have had but
expressions of the greatest tenderness; O, how
she has treated me! —— My God, how I
trembled from head to foot, when she said to
me; I renounce you: —— O Lord, I
shall never lose the sound of it out of my ears
—— it penetrated to the bottom of my

soul——that instant, I was going to declare the whole affair, but happily for poor Theresa, my mother would not hear me.-----But, after all, I was wrong, for I might have concealed Theresa's fault, and told the story of the poor woman-----No, it would still have been known that I came home alone, and then, an enquiry would have been made of the woman at Chauni, who would have told that Theresa deserted her.-----There was no way to evade that.-----However, the Almighty sees my innocence, and that ought to comfort me!-----But, after all, I never shall have the Rose, and my mother, and my poor grandmother, who believes that I shall be crowned!-----Alas! how unfortunate I am!-----No, no, I will not betray Theresa, I promised it-----but when the marriage is over, I will tell all to my mother; I cannot live without that!-----O Basil! O Theresa! what I suffer for your sakes-----O heaven, somebody comes, let me hide my tears!

SCENE III.

HELEN, MARGERY.

MAR. Helen !-----but you are in tears, my girl-----What has happened ?—

HEL. Nothing at all, Margery.

MAR. But-----you are pale as a sheet.

HEL. I must go to my grandmother-----
Adieu, Margery-----[Aside in going out.] I
must conceal myself till after the coronation.
[She goes out.]

MAR. [alone.] I am quite confounded----
What does all this mean ?-----Gossip Gertrude too was all trembling, and like one distracted !-----and Basil-----Oh, there must be something extraordinary in all this !-----
Ha ! here comes Theresa.

SCENE IV.

MARGERY, THERESA.

MAR. Tell me, Theresa, did you see Gertrude?

THE. No: why do you ask? —————

MAR. Because I just now met her, going to the Bailiff's; I wanted to speak with her, but she could neither see nor hear-----when, all on a sudden, her son Basil, coming from Robert's, to witness the ceremony, came near her.-----Go your way, says she to him, go your ways, my poor boy, go back to Robert -----and then she whispered something, I don't know what, in his ear: Basil turned red, then pale, and burst into tears; he put his hands on his face, in this manner, and sat down on a stone. Mr. Prior, who was with Gertrude, likewise said something to him softly.-----And the Prior and Gertrude went on to the Bailiff's?

THE. Is it possible?-----And what became of Basil?-----,

MAR. Oh, he remained there a good while thinking, with his eyes fixed on the ground. ———I was close by, and moving towards him; as soon as he saw me, he shuddered, and taking to his heels, fled back with all speed towards the house of his friend Robert.

THE. O heaven!-----Where is Helen?

MAR. She is crying; and when I came, she immediately made off.

THE. How?——

MAR. Theresa, my heart grieves for it? But I see plainly, Helen has committed some fault, which is to deprive her of the Crown.—

THE. She! Helen!----can you believe it?

MAR. She was the pearl of the village.---- I very well know that---However, I'll engage there are some depositions against her——

THE. Depositions!——Ah, let me fly. [She goes out, running with all her might.]

MAR. [alone.]——I believe they have all lost their senses; some madness has seized them.——[A voice is heard behind the Stage] Helen, Helen!

MAR. I hear Monica's voice; yes, it is she.——

SCENE V.

MARGERY, MONICA.

MON. Helen——where can she be?

MAR. [going to give her arm to Monica, who walks with difficulty.] I don't know, mother Monica; but sit down, and I will go and call her.

MON. This is the first time I ever missed her, when I wanted her.

MAR. But was not she with you just now?

MON. No; and I wanted to come hither, Margery, because the door is towards the Square, and now is the time of the declaration.——If my Helen is chosen Queen, I shall hear the music a little the sooner——O Margery, how my heart beats!-----

MAR. [aside] Poor old woman, she knows nothing of the matter; she must not be told, it would certainly kill her.

MON. [crying.] Helen, Helen-----

MAR. [likewise crying, and moving towards the bottom of the stage.] Helen, Helen, your grandmother calls you-----I hear her foot---she is running.

SCENE IV.

MONICA, MARGERY, HELEN.

MON. Come then, my girl——

MAR. [aside.] How melancholy she looks!——

HEL. Grandmother——

MON. Well, my child, five o'clock is struck!——you are thoughtful; for my part, thank heaven, I have no apprehensions.

——My God, who is this coming?

MAR. It is Gertrude.

SCENE VII.

MONICA, GERTRUDE, MARGERY,
HELEN.

HEL. [aside.] My blood runs cold——

MON. Come, Gertrude; do you hear any news?——

GER. [aside.] My mother, O heavens!
——and Margery!——I must be silent.
[Aloud.] Mother, what are you doing here?
you would be better in your chamber.

MON. No, daughter——It was in
this spot, this day twenty years, that I saw
our Lord of Salency come and take thy hand
——It was here I saw thee crowned, Ger-
trude——don't you remember how you
hung about my neck——how we cried?
——May the good God send me such ano-
ther day of joy, and then dispose of me as
it is his good will!——I shall leave this
world without a wish——

GER. [aside] She wrings my heart.

HEL. [aside] O what a proof!——

MON. Come hither, Helen; give me
your hand: it was in this manner I had hold
of your mother, when all the company came
to this house——My girl, you are as deserv-
ing as your mother; you are prudent, a lover
of truth, and modest as she——Is not she,
Gertrude?

GER. [aside] O my God, my God!——

MON. You seem confounded, my chil-
dren; you don't speak; that is natural——
I, who have had two daughters and a sister,
Queens, am a little more courageous; but,
however, my heart beats violently——[She
looks at Helen while she holds her by the
hand.]——How you blush!——She
trembles like a leaf——Gertrude, come
and encourage the poor little dear, come and

kiss her, I pray you——Helen, go to your mother-----

HEL. [sobbing, throws herself upon her grandmother's neck.] Dear grandmother, there is nobody but you who I dare embrace !-----

GER. Alas !-----

MON. Why so, my child ?-----Gertrude, what is the matter with you ?-----I never saw you so before.

MAR. [aside] Oh, certainly, some dreadful thing has happened !-----

MON. Come once more, Gertrude, come and embrace our child ; run to her, Helen !

HEL. [in a supplicating tone to her mother.] Mother !-----[She moves towards her. Aside.] Ah, what a look !-----[She stops.]

MON. Well ?-----what is the matter ?---

GER. Mother-----I am sorry to see you so strongly persuaded that she will be crowned !

MON. What ?——Do you know any bad news ?——You are silent——Is the Queen declared ?——

GER. I do not know.

MON. Ah, you conceal something from me——And Basil, considering what time it is, why is not he here ?——Margery !——you are all in tears !

GER. O heavens ; what noise is that——Ah, what shall we hear ?——O mother, if

you love me summon up all your courage and resolution——

MON. [bursting into tears.] Ah, my child——courage at my age——

HEL. O God, protect me !

S C E N E VIII.

MONICA, GERTRUDE, MARGERY,
HELEN, THERESA, [out of breath,
her hair in disorder, running in great haste.]

THER. Helen ——

GER. What means this violent haste ?

THER. [seeing Helen, rushes into her arms.]
Helen !-----you are declared Queen !-----

HEL. How !

MON. O God !——

GER. Is it possible ?——

MAR. What happiness !

THER. [embracing Helen several times.]
Helen, Helen is crowned !-----Mrs. Gertrude,
I alone was guilty ; I have declared all ;
Helen is Queen !

GER. I die !——

HEL. [receiving her in her arms.] O mother !——

MON. Gertrude? ———

HEL. [still holding her mother.] Oh, my mother! ——— some water, Theresa. ——— Margery, water! ———

MON. The surprise was too much for her! ———

THER. Now she comes to herself! ———

HEL. She opens her eyes! ———

GER. Helen! ——— ah my girl! ———

MON. She has hold of you ——— she is Queen ———

GER. Ah, is it true? ———

THER. You will see the Judges here presently to find her; I left the procession about three hundred paces off; I made only one spring to get here, but they who are in the train march slow ———

GER. [embracing Helen.] Dear Helen! ——— thou art innocent! ——— thou art Queen! ——— O God, neither grief nor joy kills.

MON. What was it you concealed from me? —

GER. Theresa, what have you declared? ——— Helen, however, returned home alone last night, and told me a lie? ———

THER. I'll tell you how it was. Yesterday we set out to go and gather leaves in the little wood; when we got there we found an old woman who had fallen into a ditch; she was much hurt, and was crying; we got her out, and then she told us she belonged to Chauni, but she was not able to go home; I proposed to put her upon our Afs, and to bring her

home with us ; but who will cure her wounds, said Helen ? There are surgeons at Chauni, we must carry her thither. Upon which the poor woman sobbed with joy, and said she was very desirous to return to Chauni. Come, come, said Helen ; it was no sooner said than done, and then she put her upon the Ass.----- But, said I, it is more than a league to Chauni, we shan't get back by nine o'clock----- we shall be obliged to pass through in the night-----I know that you are timorous, said Helen ; go your ways, and I will go alone.----- But, Helen, you are timorous too----- I am no longer so, said she.-----In short, we debated for some time, but at length, my heart failed ; I left Helen and the woman, after having agreed that Helen should conceal it, and that I should not be seen in the Village till night.

GER. O Helen !----I was not worthy of having such a child as thee ; I accused you, thrust you from me, and abused you-----

HEL. Could you do otherwise, dear mother, when appearances----

GER. Appearances !-----I ought not to have believed them-----

MON. I am amazed !-----

MAR. You interrupt them !-----

HEL. But, mother, do you observe what Theresa has done for me ; she went and accused herself.-----

MAR. Yes, by my faith, and without

boggling ; when I told her that all were in tears, she instantly guessed the cause, and flew like lightning.

GER. The dear girl !——

MON. Good soul !——

GER. [to Theresa.] You have been then to find the Prior ?——

THER. Yes ; at the very instant when all were assembling for the declaration, I desired leave to speak in the great Square, before all the people ; they would not hear me ; but I made such a bustle, that I was at last permitted to tell my story, which I did from beginning to end, in the presence of the whole assembly, who, the moment I had done, immediately cried out, Long live Helen our Queen of the Rose ! Our Lord of Salency, the Prior, and Bailiff, instantly proclaimed her Queen, upon which I came running hither.

GER. Well, this action makes amends for that of yesterday, which, after all, was only childish fear, that time will correct.

——Theresa, I know Basil loves you. I will go to-morrow, my girl, and ask your mother's consent.

THER. O Mrs. Gertrude !——

HEL. [embracing Theresa.] My dear Theresa !——

MON. [to Gertrude.] You have prevented me, Gertrude ; I was going to say the same thing.——

GER. I was very certain, mother, you

would not oppose it.——But what is this I hear?

THER. It is the music——it is the whole procession——

GER. [to Helen.] My dear child,——go and ask your grandmother's blessing!

HEL. [runs and throws herself at Monica's feet.] May my mother and grandmother bless me, and heaven preserve them both! [Monica and Gertrude embrace her.]

MON. I cannot speak!---but the Almighty sees into my heart, and knows the good I wish you!

GER. Be still prudent and pious as thou art; that is all we can ask of him for our dear and deserving child!-----

MAR. O happy family!-----

THER. But, where is Basil?----

GER. Send somebody to see for him, Margery-----

MAR. I will go myself-----Ha, here he is, and all the people with him.-----

[Rural music is heard at a distance.]

S C E N E IX.

The PRIOR, the BAILIFF, the LORD of SALENCY, MONICA, GERTRUDE, MARGERY, HELEN, BASIL, THERESA, Mrs. DUMMER, MARY, some other Ladies, a Company of young Girls, Musicians, &c.

BASIL, [running before the rest of the people, catches Helen in his arms, who is still on her knees before her mother and grandmother. Monica is sitting.] Helen! — my dearest sister! —

GER. and MON. My son! — [They embrace one another in tears. The rest of the Spectators stop to view the affecting Scene.]

MON. My dear children, help me to rise. [They help her to rise. The Lord of Salency, the Prior, and the Bailiff come forward.]

L. OF SAL. Dear Mrs. Monica, what a happy day for you and for Salency — the worthy action of one girl of our village, does he-

nour to us all !—[All the young girls surround Helen with an air of joy and affecting tenderness. The Lord says to the Prior, in pointing to the girls :] Would a stranger, on witnessing this scene, suspect that Helen is surrounded by none but rivals ?——

PRI. Happy the man who can justly estimate the invaluable blessing of being the owner of this fortunate corner of the world !

MON. [to the Lord.] That nothing may be wanting to compleat our satisfaction, we beg that our good Lord will give his consent that Basil may be married to Theresa.

BAS. O heavens !——

L. OF SAL. You cannot do better, mother Monica ; Theresa is worthy of being your daughter. It is not for having declared the truth that I admire her, for she would have been a monster if she had remained silent ; but what I praise her for, is the noble candid manner in which she confessed her fault. She might have entrusted her secret to two or three people only, which would have been sufficient to reinstate Helen in all her claims to the crown of Roses ; but instead of that, she wanted to make her friend's triumph compleat, by declaring her innocent in presence of the whole assembly ; it was in the great square she told her story, without attempting to excuse herself, thinking only of shewing the merits of Helen, and at a time when she was persuaded, that by this action she would for ever forfeit all claims to the crown of

Roses, and lose her reputation. 'Tis that which merits the esteem and praise of every good Salencian, and the title you now offer her.——But let us no longer delay the affecting ceremony, which gives a crown to virtue; come, Helen, you must for a moment be separated from your worthy parents; the fairest of my privileges is that of leading you to church: I think it too great an honour to yield it even to your mother. [He moves forward and offers his hand to Helen, who makes a courtesy and leans upon his arm.] Gertrude, you will follow us?——Mother Monica, can you come?——

MON. Yes, yes, my Lord; my joy has made me younger, by a score of years.

GER. My dearest mother, Basil, Theresa, and I will help you.

MON. Come then, my dear children, and support your happy old mother——

L. OF SAL. I will, as 'tis my duty, lead back the Queen of the Rose to her home, and then I hope that she and her family, with all the Village, will come to my house and dance till night——

MON. Ah, most willingly.

L. OF SAL. Come then, we will set out—and let us go slow, on account of the worthy Mother Monica.——[The Lord, leading the Queen of the Rose, goes first; then Monica, supported by Gertrude, Basil and Theresa. The Prior and the Bailiff go in the same rank: The young Girls follow next; then the Ladies who are strangers, the Musicians,

and the Spectators close the procession. As soon as the procession begins to move, the Musicians play a march. Mrs. Dummer and Mary remain the last. All the people go out except Mrs. Dummer and Mary.]

MAR. Well, Mama, why don't you follow, it is so pretty?

Mrs. DUM. I am quite confounded! I have come four leagues to see this, and am only a shop-keeper's wife—but indeed, Mary, it is a sight worthy the presence of a Queen—yes truly, a Queen would be delighted, and in raptures at seeing these good, these worthy Salencians—I promise you she would—

MARY. Well then, Mama, let us go and join them.

Mrs DUM. Come then, let us go. Alas, why was not I born in Salency?

[They go out.]

M

THE
MILLINER.

A
COMEDY,
IN ONE ACT.



THE PERSONS.

Mrs DUNFORD, the Milliner.

JUDITH, Forewoman.

NANCY,

MARTHA,

JULIA,

ISABELLA,

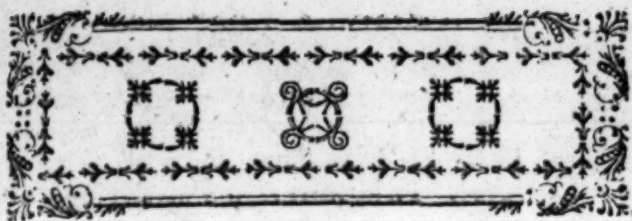
} Shop Girls.

LADY LINTON.

LADY ELFORD.

The Scene is at Mrs. Dunford's House in Paris.





THE
M I L L I N E R.
A
C O M E D Y.

S C E N E I.

[On the stage is seen a counter, and at the bottom, a glass door which opens to the street.

Mrs. Dunford is sitting at work, and Judith at her side ; next to Judith sits Nancy, and on the other side Martha, Julia and Isabella, likewise at work ; Candles are placed on the counter.]

Mrs. DUNFORD, [after a short silence, raises her head, and observes the young girls on the opposite side speaking softly.]

SO girls, what is the meaning of all this whispering ! — Is that the way you work ?

VOL. IV.

H

—I must then always keep my eye upon you——In your situation you ought to be very diligent and industrious——see Judith. —Do you ever see her listening, or her nose up in the air?——She thinks of nothing but her work——however, she can laugh as well as another; that is natural at her age; but there is a time for every thing. [Here follows a long silence.] Judith, some thread—

JUD. There Madam, [reaching the thread.]

[A silence, after which the girls opposite to Mrs. Dunford burst into a laugh, but endeavour to stifle it]

Mrs. DUN. Well, what now? ———

MAR. My God, Ma'am, it is Miss Julia that makes us laugh.

JUL. It was you, Miss, that began——

MAR. Who, I? ———I did not say any thing——

Mrs. DUN. I am not displeased that you divert yourselves, provided your work does not stand still; besides, some allowance must be made for youth; but what I positively insist upon, is, that we have no concealings, nor speaking low. You ought all to look upon me as your mother, and you would be very much to blame if you kept any thing secret from me.

ISA. Indeed, Madam, we must be excessively ungrateful, if we did not love you with all our hearts! ———I in particular. — [She sighs.]

Mrs. DUN. Certainly I have no desire but your good.——[After being some time silent.] It is seven o'clock, I must go out——Judith, go and fetch my cloak.——

JUD. Do you go out alone, Madam?

Mrs. DUN. Yes, I am going to Lady Clements. [Judith goes out.]

MAR. Lady Clements, that lives in Rich-lieu street?

Mrs. DUN. Yes, the same.

JUL. I have been twice at her house; she is rather elderly, but a very agreeable lady.

Mrs. DUN. Yes, indeed, she is so; I had the honour of serving her fifteen years, and I know what she is.——I owe my fortune to her, it is to her I owe my marriage, my being settled in business, and the reputation of my shop. So that there is nothing in the world I would not do for her.

NAN. That is very natural.

JUL. Is she not the mother of Lady Linton?

Mrs. DUN. Yes.

JUL. What a beautiful woman is Lady Linton!

MAR. And good.

ISA. I have never seen her.

MAR. Because she has been three months at her house in the country.

JUD. [returning to Mrs. Dunford. [Here is your cloak, and your gloves, Madam. What handbox will you take?

Mrs. DUN. [rising.] Not any. Lady Clements no longer buys finery; she has left that off.

JUL. Lady Elford, however, is as old as she, and yet she loves fine things.

Mrs. DUN. That is, because the one is a woman of sense, and the other a fool. Farewell, it is late.——Adieu, my children, mind your work. Judith, is my mother above?

JUD. Yes, Madam.

Mrs. DUN. And Magdalen with her?

JUD. Yes, Madam.

Mrs. DUN. That is well —— I must go —— I will be back in an hour.

[She goes out.]

SCENE II.

JUDITH, taking Mrs. Dunford's place, NANCY, MARTHA, JULIA, ISABELLA.

NAN. How careful she is of her mother!—

JUD. She would give her her heart's blood.

ISA. Mrs. Murray is likewise a very good woman.

NAN. [to Isabella.] You have been here only three weeks, but when you know her better, you will love her a thousand times more. She is as worthy, as charitable, as pious as her daughter, and that is saying every thing.

ISA. Tell me then, Miss Nancy, what is the reason she almost always wears a close gown, and never trimmed facques.

NAN. It is because she was only a peasant, before Mrs. Dunford made her fortune.

ISA. O that is the reason then of her country dialect?

NAN. Certainly.

JUD. When Mrs. Dunford saw herself in a situation to admit of it, she took her from

the village where she lived, and brought her here——

ISA. [sighing] It is being very fortunate to have it in one's power to be the cause of a mother's happiness.

JUD. Yes, indeed, to have even the hope of it, gives one a heart to work——[A long silence,]

JUL. To-morrow is a holiday; I am glad of it.——

MAR. Yes, and we'll go and take a walk after service.

JUL. O, I shall have a greater pleasure than walking.

MAR. What is it?

JUL. Mrs. Dunford has lent me a charming book to read.

JUD. 'Tis Pamela, I'll wager?

JUL. It is so.

JUD. She made me read it twice, and many a tear I shed.

MAR. I have read it too——

JUD. Lady Clements gave it long ago to Mrs. Dunford, when she was young.

MAR. Is it called a Romance?

JUD. Yes; but Mrs. Dunford says it is the only one we should read; all the rest are bad, especially for us.

NAN. I remember she once scolded me very much, because I was reading Hypolito Earl of Douglass——and she was right, for there is nothing in it but insipid love stories——but instead of that, Pamela has such charm-

ing interesting events.——

JUD. Pamela is so virtuous; she has such a love for her father and mother.——

JUL. There is no such thing as reading it, without having a desire to resemble her——

ISA. O, Miss Julia, will you be so good as to lend it to me?

JUL. Yes, I promise you, you shall have it.

ISA. Miss Judith, I have been told, that Mrs. Dunford sends for fiddles to come here at carnival time? I was always wishing to ask you about it——(ah, my needle is broke)——is it true?——

JUD. Yes, indeed. Mrs. Dunford is desirous that we should work, but likewise she is willing to procure us amusement.

MAR. O, yes, on Monday and Shrove Tuesday she invites her acquaintance, and makes us all dance from five o'clock till ten.

ISA. How long is it till Shrove Tuesday?

JUL. Alas! it is still five weeks.

ISA. That is a great while.

JUL. [rising and going from the counter.] I must walk a little, my feet are quite benumbed with the cold.

ISA. [rising.] And I too.

NAN. [to Judith.] Judith, was not you at Lady Elford's this morning?

JUD. Yes, with Julia.

JUL. My God, what a tiresome creature is that Lady Elford! She kept us waiting more than two hours. It is very droll——the

old coquette!——I would not be her maid, however.

ISA. Was she at her toilet?

JUL. Yes, before the looking-glass; she looked at herself with a melancholy air, and I believe that put her out of humour, for she is never so intolerable as when she is going to have her head dressed!——She kept such a growling——She so scolded her valet and her maids——She stupified them so, as to make one pity them.——How awkward you are! How clumsy you are!——She had no better language to give them; and in so rough a manner, with her eyes sparkling like a fury!——O, the odious woman!

ISA. And did she buy any thing?

JUL. Yes, our whole box; but to see her manner!——with a disdainful careless air, as much as to say, I do not want any thing.——[She mimicks her] Miss, what is the price of that?——Two guineas, Madam.——It is horrible!——it is hideous!——such taste! so fantastical!——

[All the Girls laugh except Judith.]

ISA. [still laughing.] She made all those wry faces?

MAR. O, it is very true; that's just her.

JUL. And then, tho' she looks sour, she buys. All this is to pretend a careless indifference, to make people believe she no longer cares about dress, because she very well knows, that to be so attentive to it, at her age, is very ridiculous; but the drollest thing of all, is, when she is shewn some piece of dress that

is evidently much too young for her, it is a comedy indeed.——O fie, says she, who can wear such a thing! How ridiculous!——what wretched taste!——how excessively vulgar!——[The Girls laugh again.]

JUD. Well, but tell me, Julia, if Mrs. Dunford was here, would you tell all these stories?

JUL. They are not stories; I invent nothing.

JUD. But, is it pretty to make game of our neighbour in such a manner, especially people to whom we owe respect?——You invent nothing, so there is great merit in that: and you do not think detraction is a fault?——

NAN. Judith is right, and we were wrong in laughing.

JUD. [to Julia.] What I say to you, Julia, is from my regard to you.

JUL. For which reason, my dear Judith, I will profit by it; [She embraces her] do not be angry. Marry, you are older than I; you have been a long time with Mrs. Dunford, and it is to be expected, that you should be prudent and reasonable; but I promise you, I will not again speak ill of any one.——Well, let us sit down; I will go to work; come, Isabella. [They sit down as they were before.]

ISA. Miss Judith, what is the reason Mrs. Dunford never sends me into the city?

JUD. Because you are only fourteen.——

ISA. Julia is but fifteen.

JUL. For which reason I never go alone.
———There is nobody but Nancy and Judith who go by themselves, and they very seldom.

ISA. But I can go with another,

JUL. Certainly; but in general, Mrs. Dunford does not approve of such young people as we going frequently abroad.

ISA. But however, I should like to see ladies at their toilets.———Ha! there is a coach stopping at the door.

JUD. Nancy, go and see who it is. [Nancy, rises, and opens the door; she returns laughing.] Well, who is it?

NAN. [laughing.] It is———

JUD. What is the matter?

NAN. It is Lady Elford.

[All the Girls laugh.]

ISA. What! the Lady that Julia was just now mimicking?

JUL. The very same.

JUD. Take care, let us have no giggling.

MAR. O, never fear.

JUL. [low, to Isabella.] Put on a grave face.

ISA. [low.] I cannot.

JUL. [low.], Nor I.———Let us pretend to blow our noses.———[They pull out their handkerchiefs.]

JUD. Here she comes.

[All the Girls rise up.]

SCENE III.

LADY ELFORD, [followed by her Servants, who remain at the bottom of the stage.] JUDITH, NANCY, MARTHA, JULIA, ISABELLA.

Lady ELF. Where is Mrs. Dunford?

JUD. She is gone out, Madam.

Lady ELF. Is my robe trimmed?

JUD. Your Ladyship did not desire to have it before Monday.

Lady ELF. I absolutely must have it to-morrow.

JUD. It is impossible, Madam.

Lady ELF. Impossible!———you may do it if you work all night.———

JUD. In this house, Madam, we never work all night on the eve of Festivals, because of the service next day.———

Lady ELF. So, you do not work all night?———that is another affair.———

JUD. I beg your Ladyship's pardon, but I have the honour to acquaint you, that———

Lady ELF. Go, and bring my robe, Miss; I shall carry it home.——— [Judith goes out.]

NAN. The petticoat is all trimmed, and has a very fine effect.——

Lady ELF. It is not that I care about it; I do not pay much attention to these things—but I would be served with readiness.

NAN. If your Ladyship had said at first, that you wanted it for to-morrow, every thing would have been laid aside.

Lady ELF. Shew me some caps. [Nancy and Martha rise, and take down some band boxes.]

JUL. Will your Ladyship please to have a chair.

Lady ELF. No; I do not intend to stop any time.

JUL. [aside.] I'll lay a wager she will stay an hour.

[Nancy and Martha bring a band box.]

Lady ELF. These are all common things.

NAN. There are two charming caps, Madam.

Lady ELF. Yes, they are well enough upon the hand, but when one comes to wear them, they look horribly.

MAR. [aside.] I believe so, indeed, on that face.

Lady ELF. Well, I will take them.—— And, have you any hats ready made?

NAN. Yes, Madam.

Lady ELF. I would have them quite plain, without any ornaments; besides, there are none pretty but what are so.

JUL. Will your Ladyship please to see one of six guineas, that was bespoke?

Lady ELF. A hat of six guineas! That must be curious. ——— How can any one lay out six guineas on a hat! It is really very foolish!

JUL. Your Ladyship is very magnificent, however; for we had the honour of making a Conti in blond about fifteen days ago, for which your Ladyship paid seven guineas. ——— Here is the hat. [She brings her a hat ornamented with flowers and feathers.]

Lady ELF. How frightful! ——— [the Girls turn away laughing] who is it for?

JUL. It is for Lady Linton.

Lady ELF. It is so foolish! ———

JUL. It was not she that bespoke it, it was her Father-in-law. ——— She does not like high priced millinery: she has no need of it; she is so young and handsome! ———

Lady ELF. [very peevishly.] Take away that hat, and the other things too, they are all frightful. I don't know for what reason I take my millinery here; there is nobody has any taste but Miss Millard.

NAN. Here is Judith. [Judith returns, holding the petticoat of a trimmed robe.]

Lady ELF. Let me see ——— bring it here ——— Well, I am not dissatisfied with that; the taste is good enough.

JUD. Your Ladyship desired, that it should be made as handsome as possible in blond.

Lady ELF. That is very well, very noble. ——— What a difference between that and a robe trimmed with flowers! ——— You will add some tassels?

JUD. Yes, Madam.

Lady ELF. I gave you the pattern.

JUD. They are already made, Madam.—

Lady ELF. [examining the petticoat] I think there should be some knots in these hollows?——

JUD. They shall be put, if you please, Madam.

Lady ELF. But what colour?

JUD. White, Madam.——

Lady ELF. No, that will be lost in the blond——but flesh colour——

JUL. [aside, shrugging up her shoulders.]—At forty-five, to wear a robe trimmed with rose-coloured ribbons!——

Lady ELF. I love none but gay colours; I cannot endure the prune de Monsieur, and the puce.——

JUL. I hear another carriage stopping.

[She goes to see.]

Lady ELF. [looking still at the petticoat.] When the tassels and knots are placed, it will be truly charming.

JUL. [returning.] Ah, Miss Judith, it is Lady Linton.

JUD. [laying the petticoat on the counter.] Well.——O, how glad I am!

[She runs to the door.]

Lady ELF. Good God, what joy! Miss, carry the petticoat up stairs, and don't shew the robe to any one.——Come, where are my servants? [She moves some steps to go; Lady Linton appears.]

SCENE IV.

LADY ELFORD, LADY LINTON, JUDITH, NANCY, MARTHA, JULIA, ISABELLA.

Lady ELF. [to Lady Linton.] So, your Ladyship is at last returned!——May I venture to ask how many days?

Lady LIN. We arrived but this night.—

Lady ELF. And one of the first objects of your attention, is to come to Mrs. Dunford's; that seems to me quite natural; besides, at your age——You seem to be thinner than when I saw you last?

Lady LIN. I am a little changed perhaps, but I find myself in excellent health.

Lady ELF. I flatter myself, with the hope of our supping together on Monday, at Lady Clements's.

Lady LIN. No, Madam, I cannot have that honour, for we set out to-morrow for three weeks.

Lady ELF. What, so speedily!——Well, Madam, I leave you, for certainly you have great business to do here.

Lady LIN. I am afraid Madam, that I have interrupted yours.—

Lady ELF. I only dropt in here by accident, as you may very well suppose.—

JUL. [to Lady Elford.] Did not your Ladyship say, you would take away your robe?

Lady ELF. [drily.] No; keep it.—

JUL. [taking the petticoat from off the counter.] I must take that petticoat off the counter.

Lady LIN. [looking at the petticoat.] I think it is exceeding pretty! —

JUL. There are to be flesh-coloured ribbons in the hollows, Madam.—

Lady LIN. This robe is your Ladyship's?

Lady ELF. You think, perhaps, it is a little too youthful for me; but it is a fancy of Mrs. Dunford's.

Lady LIN. [still looking at the petticoat.] It is a very gay fancy.

JUL. [aside.] Even ridiculous.

Lady ELF. Adieu, Madam; I am happy to have had the honour of meeting you; I pray you take care of your health, that you may return to us with that charming bloom you have at present.

Lady LIN. [smiling.] What value should we set on charms which three weeks may make us lose?

Lady ELF. But health is so valuable!—Tell Mrs. Dunford, Miss, to come and speak with me to-morrow. Adieu, my Lady.

[She goes out.]

SCENE V.

LADY LINTON, [and the Girls, who all come about her.]

JUD. From what does she fancy that Lady Linton is changed?—

JUL. I promise you, she was very desirous to have said she was grown ugly.

L. LIN. My dear Judith, I wanted very much to see Mrs. Dunford: I am at present in want of a maid, and I should be glad to have one of her recommending; Mrs. Dunford is such a worthy woman!—Pray how does she do?

JUD. Thank God, Madam, wonderfully well—she is gone to Lady Clements's.—

L. LIN. To my Mother's?—It is certainly upon my business. But still I have another affair to speak of to her. I have brought a poor little country girl with me, who, I believe, has five or six brothers; and I wish Mrs. Dunford would take her into her house.

JUD. To learn to be a milliner, Madam?

L. LIN. Yes; she is only fourteen, and is very pretty, and modest. She shed tears at leaving her Father and Mother.—Poor

little dear, she is truly interesting. I am certain if she comes here, she will preserve her goodness of heart, piety, and pure morals; and Mrs. Dunford will do me a real service in taking charge of her.

JUD. My God, Madam, she certainly will take her with great pleasure: Mrs. Dunford is so devoted to your Ladyship, whom she has known from your birth, and to whom she owes every thing——

L. LIN. I love her too with all my heart; and her good Mother, how is she?

JUD. Perfectly well, Madam,

L. LIN. [looking at Isabella.] I do not know this young girl.

ISA. [courtseying.] I have been only three weeks here, Madam.

JUD. Ah, Madam, she is a sweet girl.—— She has a mother who makes linen for the common people, and yet gained a scanty livelihood; when, unfortunately, she was seized with a languishing disorder, and reduced to the greatest misery. This young girl went servant of all work, to a tradesman's wife in the neighbourhood, and every day carried her dinner and supper to her Mother; when her Mother grew worse, she passed the night in nursing her, without making a boast of it, and in such a way that it was a considerable time before it was discovered. The poor girl was become as thin as a lath, she never complained, and worked incessantly; till Mrs.

Dunford being acquainted with it, took charge of Isabella, and treats her as if she was her own Daughter.

L. LIN. [looking at Isabella.] What a charming girl! — Come hither, my dear Isabella. — My God, how beautiful she seems, especially since I have heard her story. — Come and embrace me, my heart. — [She embraces her: Isabella kisses her hand.]

L. LIN. Servant of all work! — such a delicate form. — What strength, what virtue a good heart can give! — Is your Mother recovered?

ISA. Yes, Madam, thank God, and has taken to work again. She had sold all her little moveables, but Mrs. Dunford bought them again for her, and likewise a charming walnut-tree cupboard; my Mother is very happy at present.

L. LIN. Worthy Mrs. Dunford! — How you ought to love her! —

ISA. O, yes, Madam.

L. LIN. You must prove it to her, by following her counsels attentively, and by assiduous application to your business. [She pulls her purse out of her pocket, and gives it to Isabella.] Here, my child, I suppose you will be very glad to give this to your Mother. Mrs. Dunford will be pleased that you accept this little proof of my regard. [She embraces her again.]

ISA. My God, Madam, I am so confounded.

JUD. [low to Nancy.] What an adorable young Lady!——

L. LIN. Judith, I beg you will not forget my commission to Mrs. Dunford, about my little country girl; young Ladies, I recommend her to you.

JUL. Ah, Madam, we shall all love her as if she was our Sister!——

L. LIN. I depend upon it, and that you will make my little Jennet as obliging and amiable as yourselves. Farewell, Judith, farewell Isabella.

ISA. I wish to thank your Ladyship——but I cannot——my heart is so full.——

L. LIN. My dear child, never mention it. Adieu; I desire you will tell Mrs. Dunford, that her goodness to you has made me love her still better. It is a truly good action, and must inspire you with endless gratitude. [She goes out, all the Girls following her to the door.]

SCENE VI.

JUDITH, NANCY, MARTHA, JULIA,
ISABELLA.

JUD. Well, is there in this world a more charming woman than Lady Linton?

[ALL at once.] O, no, no.

ISA. [to Judith.] Here, Miss, see what she has given me. [Giving her the purse.]

JUD. [after having counted the money.] There are ten guineas! ———

ISA. O, my poor Mother! ——— my God, Miss Judith, it is late, but however, I should be glad to carry it this evening to my Mother. ———

JUD. That is but right; Nancy, will you go with her? ———

NAN. With all my heart, I am ready.

ISA. My dear Miss Nancy, you are very good! ——— But won't Mrs. Dunford be angry?

JUD. [to Isabella.] No, no, I will answer for her.

JUL. [to Isabella.] Besides, that your task for the day may be done, I will help you when you come back, and we will sit up an hour later than usual.

106 THE MILLINER,

MAR. I will help her too, as soon as I have finished my cap.——

ISA. Thank you, ladies; I assure you you do not oblige one that is ungrateful.

NAN. Come, my dear friend. [She gives her her arm.]

JUL. [to Isabella.] Wait till I embrace you——for I am as glad of your happiness as if it was my own.——Come——don't lose time; walk fast.

[Isabella and Nancy go out.]

SCENE VII.

JUDITH, MARTHA, JULIA.

[They sit down again to work.]

JUD. Poor Isabella; she well deserves to be happy.

JUL. Yes indeed; she is so good!——

MAR. And such a modest look withal!——The other day there was a young Lord who came into the shop——

JUL. Yes, to buy flowers.

MAR. The same.——Well, Isabella immediately caught his eye, I saw that.——

JUL. And I too; he kept roving about on our side to look at her, and then he said,

that she had a pretty face, and the finest eyes !
—— She lent a deaf ear to it all, and held her head in this manner, leaning over her work ; so that he was finely caught, as he had no opportunity of speaking of her eyes, since they were looking down—— but he returned, and began to praise her eye-lashes.

—— I would be glad to ask you, if any one ever thought of praising eye-lashes ? For my part I wanted excessively to laugh.—— As to Isabella, to whom it was all directed, she sat quite motionless, and kept her gravity so well, that my gentleman walked off, and looked so foolish, and out of countenance——

JUD. That is just what every young girl should do ; without which, she will draw upon herself the contempt, even of those people who direct such idle discourse to her.——
But let us talk of Lady Linton ; my God, how I love her !——

JUL. Why are not all the ladies like her ? For my part, I cannot conceive the meaning of it, as it is said, there is not one of them all who does not wish to please and to be loved ; they need only to be unaffected, obliging, affable and compassionate !—— these are the infallible means of succeeding with all the world—— By my faith, without that, they will not gain the love of any one —— to desire to be loved without being, good, is not reasonable.

JUD. Somebody knocks.

JUL. I am going.

[She goes to the door.]

JUD. Perhaps it is Mrs. Dunford.

JUL. It is an old English lady just arrived ; she speaks such terrible gibberish, and wants to see some caps and things in her carriage. I will carry some old shop-keepers to her, which are in that bandbox, and she will buy the whole as if they were the newest fashion.

JUD. O fie, Julia, would you cheat a lady because she is a foreigner ? In short, are not the least frauds, tho' in the smallest things, still contrary to probity ? Besides, by such conduct, would you not injure the true interest of Mrs. Dunford ; for the dealer who is not honest, is very soon punished, by the loss of reputation, credit, and customers ?

JUL. That reasoning is as clear as the sun ; I shall not be found overcharging, I am cured of that ; but however, I will sell a little dearer to that English Lady, than to our constant customers ?

JUD. You should not overcharge any one ; but you know very well that the price to customers is not the same as to strangers.

[Julia takes a bandbox, and goes out.]

MAR. Upon my faith, there are some customers who pay so badly, that they do not deserve much attention on that head.

JUD. Therefore, when that is known, they are charged higher, which is but just ; but there are certain bounds, beyond which conscience forbids us to pass ; and, as Mrs. Dunford

says, nothing can warrant a dealer becoming a usurer.

MAR. I think I hear Mrs. Dunford's voice.

JUD. Yes, she is speaking to Julia.

MAR. Ay, here she comes.

S C E N E VIII.

MRS. DUNFORD, JUDITH, MARTHA,
JULIA.

Mrs. DUN. Come, Julia, shut the shop, it is nine o'clock.

JUD. Madam, do you know Isabella's story?

Mrs. DUN. Yes; I found Julia at the door with a Lady in a coach, and she has told me of the generosity of Lady Linton; but I am not surprized at it, for I know a thousand instances of that kind in her. But, my girls, go up stairs; wait supper till Nancy and Isabella return, and in the mean time I will talk with Judith; I have something to say to her. [Julia and Martha go out.]

SCENE IX.

MRS. DUNFORD, JUDITH.

Mrs. DUN. You must know, I am just come from Lady Clements, who has desired me to look out for a maid for Lady Linton; she requires a worthy person, a girl, in short, for whom I can answer; and I have cast my eye upon you, my dear Judith.

JUD. What, Madam, I leave you, after the obligations I am under to you! no, there is no advantage can tempt me to leave you.

Mrs. DUN. My dear child, I certainly make a very great sacrifice in parting from you; but Lady Clements is my benefactress, and I think myself extremely happy in having it in my power to give her this proof of my attachment; and therefore I beg it as a favour, that you will consent.

JUD. Madam, I will do whatever you please to order me; however——

Mrs. DUN. You will have a good, a virtuous Mistress, in Lady Linton.

JUD. I know it, Madam; and certainly if it was not for the sorrow of leaving you, I would engage in her service with the greatest joy.

Mrs. DUN. She sets out to-morrow, and, Judith, you must set out with her; I have promised to Lady Clements, who wishes for it very much.

JUD. What, so soon!

Mrs. DUN. Yes, my dear; when once one is determined on a thing, it should be done with the best grace possible.

JUD. But, Madam, I know nothing of being a Lady's maid, nor in what manner I should conduct myself in a great family.

Mrs. DUN. You must be polite to all the servants, but not familiar with any, and you will be respected by the whole. You will have a companion; shew her a great deal of attention, but do not form any intimate connection with her till after a long acquaintance, and you are sure she is as worthy as yourself.

JUD. And if she is malicious, envious?—

Mrs. DUN. You will make her your friend; and, in discharging your duty properly, you have nothing to fear from her.

JUD. But if she speaks ill of me to my Mistress?

Mrs. DUN. Our superiors, who have the advantage of education over us, for that reason have in general more understanding than we, and can very easily discover the motives of our actions. Besides, it does not require discernment to distinguish the zeal of malice; envious people betray themselves every moment, and the least artful can see through them at first sight.——

JUD. One great happiness is, that Lady Linton is goodness itself; she is never peevish and whimsical.——

Mrs. DUN. Indeed, Judith, there is nobody perfect in this world; you must think of that: but when one finds a mistress who is just, and has a good heart, every thing may be suffered without uneasiness.

JUD. You think then, that Lady Linton has faults?

Mrs. DUN. I know of none; I only know, that one cannot fail to find some fault in the person we see every day, especially when she has no motive for pleasing us, and nothing obliges her to constrain herself with us. Besides, has not a lady particular causes of vexation? Can she be every moment in the same temper? She may be frequently hasty, because she is thoughtful, and her attention engaged in affairs of consequence; and may be accused of whims, because she is in trouble. You must bear all this with patience; and say to yourself, when you see your Mistress in an ill temper, “she is perhaps sick; or tormented by some private grief”—— then, Judith, instead of being soured by a hasty expression, or a harsh word, you will pity her, and that will engage you to her still more.

JUD. But how must I conduct myself to please her, and make myself loved?

Mrs. By sincerely attaching yourself to her; if you love her, she will love you: that is

the only way to succeed; do not seek any other; if you do, you will certainly find yourself mistaken. Is it not natural to love her who gives us wherewithal to live, who is attentive to our happiness, and our little interests; who protects our family; who desires nothing but our good; she, in short, who teaches us to be careful, and makes us subsist in our old days, if we serve her with fidelity?

—— The great misfortune of servants proceeds from their exaggerating the faults of those they serve, not thinking sufficiently of their good qualities;.. feeling too keenly their insults, and their benefits too weakly. What is the consequence? They have no attachment to their superiors, and certainly cannot be loved. When they do not serve with affection, they are no better than slaves; and every duty which they think harsh and painful, is only discharged by halves.

JUD. As for me, I shall love my mistress with all my soul, I am sure of that.

Mrs. DUN. Then you will be perfectly happy. I advise you, my dear Judith, whatever liberties she may allow you to take, that in your behaviour to her you never step beyond the bounds of the most profound respect. My dear girl, we are never right but in our proper place; when we quit it, we are compelled to return, and that is truly distressing and mortifying! In short, never speak of your mistress, let it be to whom it will, but to speak well of her; you should conceal her

faults, and boast of her good qualities. When I served Lady Clements, I remember, I was more proud when I heard her extolled, than if I had been praised myself : I looked upon myself, when in her house, as in my own family ; I knew no interest but hers ; so far from thinking of grasping, or of obtaining presents, my whole attention was employed to save her expence ; I lived upon good terms with my companions ; I never had a dispute with any one ; but if I saw any servant acting improperly, and injuring my mistress, after being thoroughly convinced (for it is wrong to suspect upon slight grounds) I acquainted her without hesitation. In this manner, during the fifteen years I served Lady Clements, I may boast of having been of very great use to her, and of having established excellent order in her family. I have been amply rewarded, in the first place by the testimony of my own conscience, and in the next, by the numberless benefits I have received from that excellent mistress. I had for a companion, a girl who was avaricious and selfish, who had no other idea, but grasping at presents and heaping up her savings : when she quitted the service of Lady Clements, she had a great deal of cloaths and linen, and about two hundred and fifty or three hundred pounds in ready money, which she had acquired at the expence of her probity. As she paid herself with her own hands, she had no reward ; by her little pilferings,

which could not secure her in bread, she lost her reputation and an annuity : and I, who had amassed nothing, have had a fortune by my mistress's means, which has exceeded all my hopes. Thus it is, Judith, that, independent of religion and virtue, our interest alone should determine us to conduct ourselves with integrity. Fix these ideas well in your mind, that masters have a perfect judgment of their servants ; that they have sometimes the weakness to suffer knaves to remain with them, but never reward them : and that all the advantages, and all the little thefts that can be made in a house during fifteen years, never equals the lot which a good master always secures to a sincerely affectionate domestic.

JUD. I listen to you, Madam, with equal pleasure and attention, for the reasoning is too clear to be above my comprehension ; and besides, I think that in every condition of life, self satisfaction and a good reputation, are worth all the treasures in this world.

Mrs. DUN. Persevere in these worthy sentiments, my dear girl, be always pious and virtuous ; prefer integrity to every thing, and in your humble station, you will be respected and esteemed, and even fortune will find you and prevent your wishes. But let us go up to my mother, she will be very glad to hear these particulars, for she is attached to the family of Lady Clements, as much as I am myself. Come, my dear. [She takes her by the arm, and they go out.]

THE END.

L

THE
LINEN DRAPER,

A
COMEDY,

IN TWO ACTS.



THE PERSONS,

MRS. DUPORE, a Linnen Draper.

SILVIA, Mrs. Dupore's Daughter,

HELEN, a young Apprentice.

HARRIOT, a Shop Girl.

Mrs. BERTRAND, Shopkeeper, and Niece
to Mrs. Dupore.

DIDO, six years old, the Daughter of Mrs.
Bertrand.

CATHERINE, maid-servant to Mrs Dupore.

The Countess of OSWALD.

Scene at Paris, in the house of Mrs. Dupore.





T H E
L I N E N D R A P E R ,
A C O M E D Y .

Le plus beau droit des vertus malheureuses
Est la faveur des ames genereuses
J. B. ROUSSEAU.

A C T I.
S C E N E F I R S T .

The Stage represents a chamber.

H E L E N , [alone. She has a gold box,
a purse full of money, and a note in her
hand.]

O Heaven, what shall I do?—How is it
possible, that any one could get into my

chamber, and put this box, this money and note, upon my table, without any person having been seen in the house! — Catharine is not a girl to suffer herself to be corrupted; she is honest. — I cannot suspect any one but Joseph, the little scullion. — I need not read the note: I know but too well from whence all this comes! — Infamous presents! and this Count Oswald happens to be my father's Colonel! my poor father! how shall I get him extricated? — Who would have thought I should have shed so many tears, on hearing news of my father! — O, how happy should I be to see and embrace him! — But I must be secret — his safety, his life depends upon my discretion. O God! — and this wicked Count Oswald is his Colonel! In this perplexity, I cannot trust my secret to Mrs. Duport! — O heaven! somebody comes; let me hide this box and money. —

[She puts them in her pocket.]

S C E N E I I.

H E L E N, C A T H A R I N E.

CAT. Miss Helen———I was looking for you. My God ! how red your eyes are ? you have been crying, I'll engage ?

HEL. No, I assure you, Catharine.——
But tell me, have you sold my cloaths ?

CAT. Not yet. If I must own the truth to you, I have some suspicions———some scruples ;———in short, a young girl like you, selling all her cloaths, and secretly, does not look well.———

HEL. But did I not tell you, Catharine, that I have an old Aunt in Burgundy, who is in great want ; that she got somebody to write to me, to beg my assistance, and that I would sell my cloaths to supply her.

CAT. Yes, you did tell me of an old Aunt. What the plague ! sell one's cloaths for an old Aunt ! that is very extraordinary. If it was for a Mother or a Father, indeed, I would willingly believe it ; but you are an Orphan, we know that ; and this old Aunt, who starts up all of a sudden, does not tell well.

VOL. IV.

L

HEL. Do you not remember I received a letter yesterday?

CAT. Yes: I surprised you when reading it; you was all in tears.——

HEL. Well, that letter was from my poor Aunt.——

CAT. And if, instead of that, it was a love letter?——I beg your pardon, forsooth—you are but fifteen, and so very pretty.——

HEL. [taking a letter out of her pocket.] Well, Catharine, see if this looks like a love-letter.——You cannot read, but see how dirty and coarse this paper is.

CAT. [looking at the letter.] No; there is but one fine Gentleman whom I suspect, and surely he would not write upon that. Besides, love-letters have quite another look; in the first place, it should be gilt, and then they are little, little things.——I have seen some.——I once served a Counsellor's Widow, and she had them in abundance; she was not handsome like you, but she was rich, and that comes to the same thing.

HEL. You cannot but remember it was this very letter I had in my hand, when you entered my chamber yesterday?

CAT. Yes, I remember; true, it was that scribble which set you a crying; and surely there is no more love in it than there is in my eye, I allow it. Well, now I believe the story of the old Aunt; and the more so, as for the two years you have been apprentice here, I never knew you tell the least lie.

———But why would you conceal it from Mrs. Duport, our Mistress?

HEL. I told you before, that I was afraid she would oppose the sale of my cloaths.

CAT. But she is so good!———

HEL. She is so, and would offer to advance me some money.——

CAT. And the rather, as the lady who educated you, and placed you here, would repay her.——

HEL. That is the very thing I wish to avoid; I already lie under so many obligations to that lady, that I should be ashamed to ask new favours: it is much better for me to dispose of my cloaths, which I can do wonderfully well without, and indeed never even wear.

CAT. But have you kept only the gown that is on your back?

HEL. Yes, yes, I have another.

CAT. Were I in your place, I would write to that lady about your aunt, and she certainly would assist her.

HEL. You have forgot that she is travelling, and is at present in Italy.——[Aside.] Alas, how unfortunate that she is not here! she would have protected me.

CAT. In Italy!——that is a great way off?———

HEL. I could not have an answer in less than a month.

CAT. Good God!——What the deuce do they do in such a lost country as that?

HEL. But, my dear Catherine, you promised me you would sell my cloaths.—

CAT. Well, I will go to the old cloaths woman presently; I have said it.—I plainly see that you are doing a good action—but nevertheless, the secret of it puzzles me.

HEL. To-morrow you may tell it; I will myself acquaint Mrs. Duport with it.

CAT. To-morrow!

HEL. Yes, I only ask you, to be discreet till to-morrow.

CAT. Come, I won't speak a word; you may depend upon it. But, by-the-by, Miss Helen, let us talk of the fine gentleman who looked at you so much last Sunday at church. Do you know he came to the shop this morning? Mrs. Duport was gone out; and I was taking care of the house while you was at church. I was trifling in the parlour, when I saw a carriage stop at the door, and the fine gentleman immediately came in. Marry, I was quite stupified; he came towards me, stamp, stamping—and asked me for Mrs. Duport.—Sir, said I, she is at church, this is a holy-day.—Upon which he said, he wanted to buy some dimity and some lace.—While he was speaking, he looked all round; I'll engage it was you he was looking for.—When I, to hear what he would say, called Joseph, who came running; “Joseph, said I, do you know if Miss Helen is gone out?—Yes, Catherine, said he “—I am sorry for it, said I, she could

" have told the gentleman how much striped
" dimity we have; for my part, I do not
" know." By my faith, when he heard
your name, all his blood was in his face;
I pretended not to observe him, and he asked
me a great many questions about you, and
then he went away.——

HEL. You did very wrong, Catharine, to
speak to him about me, and to answer his
questions.

CAT. It was only to see how he would
look; for I promise you that I detest these
wicked men who want to wheedle young
girls.——And now that I know the vile
intentions of that one, I promise you, if he
applies to me again, I will give him an an-
swer he little thinks of.——Ah, I forgot
to tell you, that when he was going away, he
wanted to give me a guinea, but I positive-
ly refused it, because I had done nothing to
deserve it; and it was probably to gain me
on your account.——O, that thought mor-
tified me to the quick!——I am sure,
I was as red as fire.——

HEL. It is he that should blush, if he
had any bad intention.——

CAT. That is true. He was a fine Lord
indeed; but poor Catharine, at that instant,
was a degree above him.

HEL. He will know, that in our situation,
Catharine, we may have sentiments more no-
ble than his.——

CAT. You are very good, Miss, to speak
to me in this manner, of our situation; you

have been bred up neither more or less than a lady; you can read and write, and have many fine things in your head, and I don't know how many books; there is a difference between you and I, and a very great one too!——

HEL. It is true, that my dear benefactress has given me an education much above my rank; but, however, I am only the daughter of a poor peasant.——

CAT. It is very good in you, however, to remember that; there are so many that forget themselves.——But let me finish my story: I know the name of the Gentleman, he is called Count Oswald; he lives hard by here with his mother, the Countess of Oswald.——

HEL. He has a mother?——

CAT. Yes, truly, and an excellent woman.

HEL. How do you know all this?

CAT. By Joseph.——He is a little artful rogue as ever was, and knows every thing.

HEL. He has a mother!——a thought strikes me.——[She muses.]

CAT. I think I hear Mrs. Duport and Miss Silvia——

HEL. Catharine, my dear Catharine, think of my cloaths——but, my God, this is a holy-day!——

CAT. No matter for that; as it is to do a good action, the woman at the old cloaths shop, that I spoke of to you, will purchase

them; she is one of my acquaintance; I undertake it, and she will give me a reasonable price, so you may be perfectly easy. Is our Mistress's daughter in your secret?—

HEL. Miss Silvia? no, surely.

CAT. She loves you very well, however.

HEL. It is for that very reason, she would perhaps, prevail with her mother to advance some money for me.

CAT. By my faith, you have a very good pretence for borrowing,——And Harriot, the shop girl, knows nothing neither?——

HEL. Not one word.

CAT. I am very glad of that, for I do not much love her; may all the harm I wish her light on me, but she has a bad tongue, she is a shuffler. Take care she does not trump up some tale against you, to Mrs. Duport; remember I give you warning; I frequently heard her drop expressions which have two meanings.——She is an ill-natured piece.——but hush——mum is the word.——

Here is Mrs. Duport.

HEL. Dear Catharine, I depend upon you.——

CAT. Don't you be afraid; do you not know that I would run into the fire to serve you?——

HEL. My dear good girl!

CAT. Hush, they are coming.—Farewell. I will go immediately on your business. [She goes out.]

HEL. Now I will go and think of my new scheme.

SCENE III.

MRS. DUPORT, HELEN.

Mrs. DUPORT. [stopping Helen.] Where are you going, Helen?

HEL. To my own chamber, Madam.

Mrs. DUP. Stop a little; I want to speak with you. Helen, you certainly have some secret uneasiness; for these two days you have not been as you used to be.

HEL. Who, I Madam?

Mrs. DUP. You blush, you have tears in your eyes——what is the meaning of this?——

HEL. Truly, Madam—I have nothing to acquaint you with.

Mrs. DUP. You were intrusted to my care, I must answer for your conduct; therefore, since you will not speak to me openly, I tell you before hand, I will watch you so narrowly, that I will discover the mystery you conceal from me. Should a girl of your age have secrets?

HEL. I have no secrets, Madam.

Mrs. DUP. Very well; I see it is needless to question you any more. You may go.

HEL. [aside in going out.] O my God, must I likewise suffer the affront of being suspected! [She goes out in tears.]

S C E N E IV.

Mrs. DUPORT, [alone.]

She is in tears———She trembles,———
There is some intrigue, some love affair in the
wind.———Yet she is but fifteen, and seems to
have such prudence and modesty!———and
even pride, for notwithstanding her gentleness,
there is pride in her character———But
she is so pretty, so remarkably handsome——
all this vexes me.———I shall ask my daughter
and Harriot, perhaps they can tell me something.

SCENE V.

Mrs. DUPORT, SILVIA, [in a Polonese robe,] HARRIOT.

Mrs. DUP. O, here they are.—Come hither Silvia.—[looking at her gown] What a trim you are in?—

SIL. Ah, mama; I was dying for a Polonese gown—it is so convenient, so pretty—especially behind, look at it.—

[She turns round.]

Mrs. DUP. Very well.—And the knots of ribbons too; nothing is wanting.

HAR. O, Miss has every thing compleat.

Mrs. DUP. And what is that upon her head, like a great baking-pan?

SIL. It is a hat.

Mrs. DUP. What, are you turned fool to dress in that manner?

SIL. How so, Mama?

Mrs. DUP. Do you know what you look like?—A rope dancer!

SIL. But, however, Mama, the ladies wear no other dress at present.

Mrs. DUP. But the ladies have their Polonese's made by the best mantua-makers, and

pay twelve shillings for making. The ladies have their hats from the best milliners; are you in a situation to run into these expences? No; you have not the air of a lady, and you will only pass for a cit, ridiculously dressed; besides, if you had a fantastical manner to this ridiculous finery, you won't be taken for a lady, nor for the daughter of an honest shop-keeper, but for something worse.—O fie—that is all that is to be got by aiming at what is above our rank.

SIL. I will go and pull off my gown, Mama.

Mrs. DUP. You will do very right; but first of all hear me—Do you know what is the matter with Helen? she has been so melancholy since yesterday morning.

SIL. No, Mama; but it is certain that she is very thoughtful, and she is naturally neither sour nor sullen.

HAR. The whole night she did nothing but whine and sob so much, that I could not shut my eyes. I asked her three different times, what was the matter with her? Says she, I have caught cold, my head is stuffed.

Mrs. DUP. You are sure she was crying?—

HAR. O, yes, Madam, very sure. And then yesterday she neither eat nor drank.

Mrs. DUP. And she has told you nothing in confidence?

HAR. O, no fear; Miss Helen is too high for that—because she reads in history

and geography, she thinks no one is worthy to untie her shoe-strings.——However, I am as good as she ; my deceased mother was an upholsterer in Lombard-street.——

Mrs. DUP. These are fine reasons indeed!——Do you think we have no value, Harriot, but what we derive from our birth? These ideas are ridiculous in people of fashion, and therefore much more foolish in us.——You are as good as Helen, because you are the daughter of an upholsterer!——What has your mother to do in the matter, I should be glad to know? The question is, are you as honest, as capable, and as well educated, as Helen? that is the way to judge if you are as good as her. Then, why do you say she is high?——it is true that she is not familiar; but is it possible to see a girl more gentle, more submissive, or less inclined to argue?

SIL. O, no, Helen is goodness itself; she despises nobody, she never speaks ill of any one, and with all this, she has such understanding, and knows so many fine things.——She has taught me five or six fables of Fontaine, that are charming; you do not disapprove of that, Mama?

Mrs. DUP. By no means; you do very right, Silvia: when we do not envy people whose understanding is superior to ours, we improve by their knowledge; and it is in this manner, my dear child, that we always find our account in being innocent, and derive

from it equal pleasure and advantage.—
But go, Silvia, and change your gown, I beg of you, and then by-and-by you may take a walk in the Park with Mrs. Bertrand and Helen.

SIL. I beg leave, Mama, to go rather to the fields.

Mrs. DUP. Why so?——You used to love the Park.

SIL. [perplexed.] It is because ——

Mrs. DUP. Well?

HAR. It is because the two last times——

Mrs. DUP. Go on.——

HAR. We were followed by a Gentleman.——

Mrs. DUP. And——was Helen with you?

HAR. Yes, truly —— and the Gentleman looked at nobody but her, and he came and set himself down by us; Miss Helen let fall her fan, and he picked it up.——

SIL. Upon which Miss Helen, in a low voice, begged me to continue our walk; we got up, and the Gentleman still followed us more closely than before; so that we determined to go away: but I assure you, Mama, that Helen did not draw this upon herself, for in the walks she is still more modest, if possible, than in the shop.

HAR. That is true indeed; she never turns her head either to one side or the other; to do her justice, she is exceedingly sedate, for her time of life.

Mrs. DUP. And the last holyday before yesterday, the same gentleman still followed you?

HAR. Yes, Madam; and though he had changed his cloaths, I recollected him immediately. 'Twas I perceived him the first; Miss Silvia, you very well remember, I gave you a touch on the elbow, and then we looked at Miss Helen, who blushed up to the ears; it was quite natural forsooth, there was reason enough to be surpris'd.

Mrs. DUP. Did the Gentleman seem young; was he well dress'd?

HAR. He is a good figure of a man—he seems to be about twenty-five or twenty-six.—If he wore a wig he would have a handsome face, but the top of his head was quite bald—he twinkles just so, when he looks—he is, notwithstanding, a genteel man; and the day before yesterday, his cloaths were all over gold, and he had a diamond button at his neck—it was certainly very fine, for it sparkled like the sun.

Mrs. DUP. [aside.] All this makes me very uneasy.

SIL. Mama, here is Mrs. Bertrand, and little Dido.

S C E N E VI.

MRS. DUPORT, MRS. BERTRAND,
SILVIA, DIDO, HARRIOT.

Mrs. DUP. Well, Niece, are you come to take your dinner with us?

Mrs. BER. Yes, Aunt, and then I have a favour to ask of you; this is a holyday, and I have thought of a party that will be very agreeable to cousin Silvia.

Mrs. DUP. We will talk of that by-and-by. Silvia, go and see if dinner is getting ready——after that, you will do two rules of arithmetic, and write three pages in your copy-book.

SIL. Mama, I cannot do all that before dinner.

Mrs. DUP. No?——but still be employed, for you know very well, that you shall not go abroad, nor amuse yourself, until that is finished.

SIL. Yes, Mama. [Silvia goes out.]

Mrs. DUP. Harriot, do you go and lead out the child; but, Dido, come first and give me a kiss.

DIDO, [going to kiss her.] Do you see, Aunt, I have got fine new shoes, they are red ones.——[She shews her shoes.]

Mrs. BER. Yes, but I'll lay a wager that Aunt's little finger will tell her, that you

would not suffer yourself to be held while your hair was dressed, and that you made the hair-dresser angry.

DIDO. Why should he tear out my hair, forsooth, and be so long about it?

Mrs. BER. You must be content to suffer, to be pretty.

DIDO. But must one be pretty?

Mrs. DUP. No, my dear, you must be good and obedient, that is what is necessary; but since it is your Mama's desire to have your hair dressed, to please her you should hold yourself properly while it is doing; for a girl is never loved, except when she is very obedient to her Papa and Mama.

DIDO, [to Mrs. Bertrand.] Well, Mama, I will do whatever you please; but I would rather read a page more of my book every day than have my hair dressed.

Mrs. DUP. Well, my little mouse, go in and play.

HAR. [offering her her hand.] Come, my little sprout. —

DIDO. O I can go very well alone.

[She goes out running.]

Mrs. BER. What life and spirits!

Mrs. DUP. Harriot, follow her.

[Harriot goes out.]

S C E N E VII.

MRS. DUPORT, MRS. BERTRAND.

Mrs. DUP. Indeed, Niece, your little one has great reason to complain of the hair-dressing you make her undergo: tho' she is only six years old, I would not say so before her; for a Mother should never be blamed in presence of her child.

Mrs. BER. But dear Aunt, she is so very pretty when she is dressed. —

Mrs. DUP. By no means; it is much prettier to see her hair without any dressing, than when it is close matted and plaistered with pomatum and powder, which makes her look as black as a mole. Besides, what is of much more consequence, by making her so early get into a habit of being a long time in dressing her head, you accustom her to lose time, and to become an idle, expensive coquet.

Mrs. BER. Heaven defend me! I hope, dear Aunt, that your good advice will preserve me from such a misfortune.

M 3

Mrs. DUP. Well, Niece, since you are not displeased with my giving you my advice; I have still some other little matters to mention to you about your child. You tell her idle tales, that can be of no use. Why would you persuade her that a little finger speaks, and tells you what she does? That only serves to make her silly, and keep her childish the longer. It must lessen her confidence in you, when she finds that you have invented all these idle stories. She will recollect that you told her these falsehoods without any necessity, and will not believe you when you tell the truth. Children should never be deceived, and should always be talked to reasonably, as far as they have power to comprehend. Besides, is it not much better to tell her plainly, that you know what she does, because you watch and observe her; and that you can guess, because you have more sense and understanding than she?—The child, by such a conduct, will regard you more, and will accustom herself to shew respect to age and experience, which is certainly right, and preserves young people from numberless follies. In short, now that we are talking freely, there is yet one particular, for which I must blame you: your little girl says you and thee to you; and I own it shocks me excessively.——

Mrs. BER. Ah, dear Aunt, I own it is a pleasure to me; I would accustom my dear child to love me.——

Mrs. DUP. That is very right; but you do not take the proper method. A girl should not behave to her mother as if she was her companion, it is quite out of order. By lowering yourself, you lose your value, and of course you will less deserve to be loved, and you may depend upon it you will be less esteemed: you may be assured, that if you take from the heart of a good girl, the respect she has for her mother, you deprive her of one half of her friendship. I do not tell you that you should be severe, and keep your children at a distance; on the contrary, you should gain their confidence, and shew them nothing but condescension and cordiality. Let us not inspire them with fear, but let us deserve to be respected; that familiarity breeds contempt is very true; it has never had any other effect, especially from fathers and mothers.

Mrs. BER. I comprehend you very well, dear Aunt, and I assure you I will profit by your advice. I shall be glad to have my girl as well educated as Silvia: I shall spare no expence to give her a good education.

Mrs. DUP. It is the greatest gift we can leave to our children. What do you propose Dido to learn?

Mrs. BER. I think of having a music-master for her, to teach her to sing.

Mrs. DUP. I can by no means advise it. Singing and dancing are two accomplishments, in themselves very useless, and very dangerous in our station.

Mrs. BER. Dear Aunt, I understand very well what you mean ; but we are of a tolerable good family, and in such easy circumstances as not to be afraid of those inconveniencies.

Mrs. DUP. But after all, we are only citizens and shopkeepers ; and unfortunately, we have oftener than once seen the daughters of parents in as good a rank of life, go upon the stage *. I know very well, thank God,

* It is not intended to criticise any station of life, in this work ; and it is believed that virtues are to be found in every rank. What is said here, relates only to those young girls, who are seduced and go upon the stage against the will of their parents. Such, certainly, deserve to feel all the weight of public contempt and execration ; and it may be even regarded with satisfaction, that the excess of their infamy, their remorse, and the loss of their youth, cannot fail, sooner or later, to revenge their unhappy parents. They have renounced all the virtues of their sex, betrayed all the sacred duties of nature, and will ever remain objects of indignation and horror, to minds of sensibility. Pursued by Divine Justice, and the curses of their parents, they must feel the inevitable chastisement of perverse, unnatural children, and reap the dreadful fruits of vice, reproach, repentance, and despair.

that it is seldom we see young people so foolish and so unnatural, as to fly from their home, and resolve to stab their father and their mother to the heart, by preferring a life of infamy, to a comfortable and honourable situation.

Mrs. BER. Besides, if a misfortune of that kind should happen to such creditable people as we, certainly we could have sufficient interest to get the abominable creature who could thus forsake us, shut up for life.

Mrs. DUP. No doubt of that; but we ought to take every precaution in our power, to prevent the necessity of ever coming to such cruel extremities. In every rank of life, a young girl that is a coquet, will be despised; but in our situation particularly, she who is not inspired with the greatest modesty, may, in a moment's time, dishonour her parents, since she is exposed to dangers and seductions, to which the daughters of people of fashion are not; so that you see we cannot take too much care of their education.

Mrs. BER. But from the dread of their turning out badly, must we breed them up in ignorance, and renounce the pleasure of seeing them have accomplishments?

Mrs. DUP. By no means, that is not my opinion; I do not know a great deal, but however, I have read a little here and there, when I had a few moments to spare; and my deceased Uncle, the counsellor, made me a

present of a small collection of about fifty books, * in which I found many excellent things; which has more and more convinced me, that without a little instruction, it is almost impossible to discharge our duty. For which reason I was desirous that Silvia should have some reading, that she should write and spell well, and be a perfect accountant †.

* According to the principles of Mrs. Duport, it is to be supposed, that in her Uncle's present were to be found Thomas-a-Kempis, the Sermons of Bourdaloue and Massillon, the Thoughts of Pascal, the Essays of Nicole, Telemachus, Pamela, Clarissa, Grandison, the Tales of Madam Aunoi, the Advice of a Mother to a Daughter, by Madame Lambert, the Letters of the Marquis of Rozelles, the Magazine for Children, a Treatise on the Education of Women, or a Compleat Course of Instruction, and the Conversations of Emilia, a charming work upon education, replete with sense and truth, both moral and agreeable, and which may equally inform and interest mothers, and young people of every condition. 'It will undoubtedly be observed, and it is very remarkable, that six good works upon the subject of education, may be quoted, and all written by women.'

† Mrs Duport might have added, that some agreeable accomplishments should be given to those young girls of whom she speaks; such as

These, my dear Niece, are pretty near my ideas: but we will talk of it another time; for it is not in one day that such a subject can be examined compleatly. But now tell me what party of pleasure you want to propose for Silvia?

Mrs. BER. My sister went the day before yesterday to see a comedy.

Mrs. DUP. Was it at the French comedy?

Mrs. BER. O, no, it is much prettier and cheaper; the best places cost only fifteen pence, so that we can have that amusement without any inconvenience; and then it is charming! My Sister saw a little farce, which is called, 'Love turned Mendicant,' and gave me an account of it.——It is played by little girls of twelve and thirteen years old——and they are so pretty!——

Mrs. DUP. You certainly believe that children of that age ought not to perform any

drawing, for example, without neglecting to teach them, at the same time, all the little works that women learn, so that they may be able to make things for themselves, instead of spending money uselessly in buying such millinery as they want. In short, above all, they should be accustomed to join in managing household affairs, be minutely instructed in the manner of conducting a family: and an example should be set them of piety, economy, and industry.

but little pieces that are very decent, and what our girls may hear without danger; but that is by no means the case.—I was there once myself, and saw the very piece of which you now speak; and I assure you, if I had taken Silvia with me, I should never have forgiven myself for such imprudence.

Mrs. BER. Indeed!

Mrs. DUP. You have no idea of the indecency of that piece; and all those that are played there, are of the same kind.

Mrs. BER. O fie!—Besides, it must be very disagreeable and shocking to hear little girls who are still infants, say things that are capable of making a woman of forty blush; and likewise to see effrontery and debauchery appear at the age of innocence; for my part, I have no idea of it.

Mrs. DUP. O, it is a depravation, which certainly must disgust every mind that has the smallest portion of delicacy!—

Mrs. BER. But how happens it, that all the people in our rank of life, carry their daughters there?

Mrs. DUP. Because the best places cost no more than fifteen pence.

Mrs. BER. A very fine reason indeed, for choosing an amusement so pernicious to morals!—On returning home, can a mother with a good grace recommend prudence and modesty to her daughter?—I shall give my Sister a good scolding to-morrow, for having taken so much pains to induce me to go there.—It is horrible!—

Mrs. DUP. It is to be hoped, that in time such an abuse will be got the better of, and youth no longer carried to amusements where they can be corrupted.

Mrs. BER. Well, aunt, if you please, we will take a walk as we did the other day.—

Mrs. DUP. Yes; and besides, in my opinion, it is a much more healthy recreation than to be shut up in a play-house, where one is stifled; you have only to take a coach to Boulogne-wood, where you can enjoy the air, and take a walk.

Mrs. BER. With all my heart; and Helen will go with us.

Mrs. DUP. Now you mention Helen, I am exceedingly uneasy about her.—She is very melancholy.—The two last times she walked with you, she was followed by some young Lord; did you observe it?

Mrs. BER. No,* because I am accustomed to see her much taken notice of;—every body is struck with her figure! —

Mrs. DUP. And did she always appear to you, to behave with the same decency?

Mrs. BER. O, yes; I never saw a young girl more modest, or who makes less account of her beauty; with all that, she is so well educated, so polite, so gentle!—Nobody could suspect her to be an apprentice.

Mrs. DUP. The Marchioness of Solange, who is a lady of great merit, has given her an excellent education. She intends, when

her daughter marries, that Helen shall be her maid. Lady Solange, by whom I have had the honour to be protected many years, when she set out for Italy, entrusted Helen, whom she dearly loves, to my care; and if this young girl should be guilty of the least indiscretion while she is with me, I shall be truly inconsolable. Therefore as my health does not permit me to accompany you to your walks, I beg you will fill up my place, and watch her attentively.

Mrs. BER. You may depend upon it; but I assure you I think she has an understanding much above her age.——

Mrs. DUP. I have never seen any thing in her, but what was perfectly modest; I do not know a better heart: however, as she is but fifteen, the person to whom she is entrusted, should not be negligent.

Mrs. BER. Is she not an orphan?

Mrs. DUP. Yes, according to every appearance; her mother was a poor peasant, and fell in love with a young man, whom she married. She died in child bed of this little girl; the father, who was only eighteen, enlisted, and went to the Indies, where it is probable he died; and Lady Solange took the child into her house, and has taken care of her ever since.

CAT. [entering, to Mrs. Duport.] Madam, dinner is upon table.

Mrs. DUP. Let us go to dinner; come, Niece.——[They go out.]

CAT. [alone, taking money out of her pocket.] I have got eight guineas for the cloaths.—Miss Helen will be very well satisfied. I must make haste and give it her.

[She goes out.]

End of the First Act.

N 2

A C T II.

S C E N E F I R S T.

CATHARINE, [alone seeming disturbed,
and looking around.]

SHE is not here?—But where the plague is she?—She is neither in her chamber, nor in the shop!—Perhaps she is in the kitchen.—I will go and see.—
[She moves some steps to go.]

S C E N E II.

CATHARINE, HARRIOT.

HAR. [stopping Catharine.] Catharine, do you know where Helen is? As she would

not come to dinner, Mrs. Duport is uneasy, and has sent me for her.

CATH. She is probably in the kitchen.

HAR. No, I am just come from thence.

CATH. My God! where can she have crept?

HAR. By my faith, I believe she is gone out.——

CATH. What, gone out alone?——

HAR. Here comes Miss Silvia, who I'll engage has some news, for she seems in great agitation,

S C E N E III.

CATHARINE, HARRIOT,
SILVIA.

SIL. Ah Harriot.——I am distracted!

HAR. What is the matter?

SIL. Helen!——

HAR. What of her?——

SIL. She has made her escape.

CATH. Made her escape!

SIL. While we were at dinner.

HAR. A rare enterprise indeed!——

CATH. Is it possible!——

SIL. O, nothing more certain; she is not in the house; and a little boy at the corner

of the street, has told my Mother that he saw her go off half an hour ago.——

CATH. I shall sink in the ground!——

HAR. Well, I always suspected she would play some prank——she was so secret, so underhand!——

SIL. There is need to be so anxious to judge amiss.——I will not believe yet but Helen is virtuous.

HAR. A girl of fifteen, however, to run away——does not portend any good.

CATH. But tell me, Miss Silvia——is your Mama greatly enraged against her?

SIL. She cries——she is grieved——she has written to the Lieutenant of the Police——but I hear my Mother's voice——

HAR. Yes, it is she.

S C E N E IV.

MRS. DUPORT, SILVIA, HARRIOT,
CATHARINE.

Mrs. DUP. Silvia, go to your chamber; do you go too, Harriot; and you, Catharine, stay, I want to speak with you.——

[Silvia and Harriot go out.]

CATH. My God, Madam! would you make me answerable for the tricks of Miss?——Helen; that would not be just.——

Mrs. DUP. I have always known you for an honest girl.——

CATH. God be thanked, I never did harm to any one.

Mrs. DUP. And I hope you will tell me the truth.——Has Helen trusted you with any secret?

CATH. O, Madam, as I hope for mercy, I assure you, that I had not the least thought of her escape.

Mrs. DUP. But, however, her cloaths were in your chamber, and she has carried all away except a little linen; is it possible that you did not perceive that?——

CATH. It is because she had bewitched me, that is the truth of it.——

Mrs. DUP. You knew then, that she had taken away her cloaths.

CATH. By my faith——it was I that sold them for her.

Mrs. DUP. How!

CAT. Certainly for her old aunt:——as she said; but I see now how it is——she made me fall into the snare with her sanctified look.——She cried, and then my little Catharine, here; my dear Catharine there—in short, I sold her whole stock this very day; I gave her eight guineas, and she only waited for that to make off——the little dissembler, with her old aunt! There is the trick she has played me.——

Mrs. DUP. I do not comprehend one word of all this story,

CAT. It is very plain, however.——She pretended to cry bitterly for her old aunt——and that her old aunt was in distress——and it must be concealed from you, because of your good heart——and such idle stuff——and then she shewed me an old ragged paper, as black and as greasy as I don't know what.——This is from my old aunt, says she——the little cunning thing!——how artful she is——a little slut of fifteen——to behave in such a manner, and to go off with a young spark, [begging pardon] for his quality.——

Mrs. DUP. How! you know the person who has led away this unhappy girl?

CATH. I'll be hanged if it is not that Count Oswald, who came into the shop this morning.——

Mrs. DUP. But, Catharine, how comes it that you did not acquaint me with all this?—

CATH. I wanted to do it, but Miss Helen always begged I would not say any thing to you, because you would lend her money.

Mrs. DUP. What is the meaning of this?

CAT. Yes, it was all a pretence to affect being generous; you understand——

Mrs. DUP. I have no longer patience—— but what noise is that I hear within?

CATH. What an uproar!——God forgive me, sure I hear Miss Helen's voice!——[She takes some steps to go out.]

SCENE V.

Mrs. DUPORT, HELEN, SILVIA, HARRIOT, CATHARINE.

Mrs. DUP. It is she!—

CATH. Good Lord!

SIL. Mama, here she is; she is come back of herself; she protests she is innocent.—
O, Mama, receive her, and forgive her.

HEL. [sinking down upon a chair.] Alas! pardon me.—I am quite spent.—

Mrs. DUP. Where have you been, unhappy girl?

HEL. Ah, Madam!

Mrs. DUP. Silvia, leave us by ourselves.—

HEL. No, Madam, I intreat you to let her stay, I have nothing to say but what she may hear.

Mrs. DUP. Well, then, say, where have you been?

CATH. Yes, let us know that.—

HEL. [rising.] I this morning received a gold box, a note, and fifty guineas.—

CATH. Ha! this is something new.—

HEL. I found these vile presents in my chamber, and I was convinced in my own mind

that Joseph had been bribed, and that it was he who had put the money and the box in the drawer of my table.——

CAT. The little good for nothing!——

Mrs. DUP. And do you know from whom these presents come?

CATH. Yes, yes, I believe she suspects.

HEL. From Count Oswald.

Mrs. DUP. That lives hard by here?

HEL. Yes, Madam.

CATH. She don't boggle in her answers, however: she seems to go roundly to work.

Mrs. DUP. But now, let us come to the point; after all, why did you go out?

CATH. Ay, that is the matter!——

Mrs. DUP. And where have you been?

HEL. [confused.] I have been to carry back what I received.

Mrs. DUP. What! to Count Oswald.

HEL. Yes, Madam.—I gave the parcel to the Porter, directed to the Countess Oswald his mother.——

Mrs. DUP. And why to that Lady?

HEL. Because I wrote to her.——

Mrs. DUP. Helen, all this does not seem probable.

CATH. It does not end well!

SIL. [aside, looking at Helen.] She is perplexed.—I tremble.—

HEL. I have said nothing but the the truth, Madam.

Mrs. DUP. Was you in Lady Oswald's house?

HEL. No, Madam.

Mrs. DUP. But it does not require a quarter of an hour to go from hence to Lady Oswald' and back again, and you have been more than an hour absent.

CATH. She has gone sadly wrong, I am afraid.

Mrs. DUP. Have you been no where else, answer me ?

HEL. I have—been likewise——

Mrs. DUP. Where ?

HEL. I cannot mention it.——

Mrs. DUP. How !——

CATH. Ah ! O Lotd.——

Mrs. DUP. You cannot tell !

HEL. Appearances are against me—— but, Madam, for pity's sake, suspend your judgment ; an indispensable duty obliges me to be silent.——

Mrs. DUP. This is carrying your effrontery too far. Prepare this instant to go to the convent ; I shall conduct you, and you must remain there till the arrival of Lady Solange.

SIL. Trust my mother Helen, Catharine and I will leave you.

HEL. No, Miss, I will say nothing more. I wish rather to appear guilty, than justify myself by betraying a secret with which I have been entrusted.

Mrs. DUP. And do you think I can be the dupe of such an evasion ?

CATH. Yes, faith, a fine fool-trap indeed.

SIL. Ah, Helen, Helen, how you have deceived me!——

HEL. So then, I am suspected, accused of the most infamous meanness, and driven from this house which was so dear to me!——

Mrs. DUP. You are no longer worthy to remain in it.

HEL. O, heavens!——

Mrs. DUP. Come, let us be gone—— come.——

HEL. What, Madam, this instant?——

Mrs. DUP. I will not suffer you to sleep another night in my house.——

HEL. [to Silvia.] What, Miss Silvia; will you say nothing in my favour?

SIL. I pity you, but I must no longer love you.

CATH. That cuts me to the heart, however——

HEL. O, my God, such trials——what, all abandon me at once!——

HAR. [entering in a violent hurry to Mrs. Dupont.] Madam, here is a Lady who wants to speak with you.

Mrs. DUP. I am not in a condition to receive her——do you go, Silvia.——

HAR. [aside.] They are all in tears!

Mrs. DUP. [to Harriot.] Do you know her name!

HAR. She calls herself Countess of Oswald.

HEL. Great God!

Mrs. DUP. Lady Oswald!

VOL. IV.

O

HAR. She was close at my heels——Here she comes.——

SCENE VI.

Countess OSWALD, Mrs. DUPORT,
HELEN, SILVIA, CATHA-
RINE, HARRIOT.

HEL. O, heavens, what am I to hear!—
[She draws back and conceals herself behind
Silvia, and leans against a chair.]

Mrs. DUP. [advancing to the Countess.]
Your Ladyship, I suppose, wants to speak
with me in private? I can but too easily
guess the subject which procures me the ho-
nour of this visit——

COUN. [pointing to Silvia.] Satisfy my
impatience; is this young person Helen?——

Mrs. DUP. No Madam, thank God.

COUN. But, Helen, where is Helen?

Mrs. DUP. The wretch hides herself, and
doubtless not without reason.

COUN. What is that you say?

Mrs. DUP. I intreat your Ladyship will
spare her, and walk into my apartment,
where she can explain herself without wit-
nesses.——

COUN. What do I hear!——Helen suspected! Let every one remain, I will justify her to all the world; let her come.——

HEL. [coming forward with timidity.] Here I am, Madam. Alas! pardon my boldness, and let me intreat you not to discover my secret.

COUN. [running to her.] Come, my dear girl——[She takes her in her arms, and embraces her several times.]

MR. DUP. What! can she be innocent?

COUN. Innocent!——she is an angel; yes, an angel; her heart is as excellent as her figure.——My dear Helen, you no longer have a secret, make yourself perfectly easy; your father is at my house.

HEL. O God!

Mrs. DUP. Her father!——

COUN. His affair is settled; my son has taken the whole upon himself; banish all apprehensions.

HEL. [throwing herself at the feet of the Countess.] Ah, madam, you restore me to life.

COUN. Could you doubt one moment of the excess of my concern for you?——But, I observe, that all around us are astonished; and I have the greatest impatience to acquaint them with the truth.——

Mrs. DUP. I own I am confounded; but, however, I am at the summit of my wishes, since Helen is still worthy of that affection we have always had for her.

SIL. I shall never forgive myself for having caused her so much unmerited distress.

CATH. Nor shall I forgive myself; but appearances were so strong!

Mrs. DUP. We should not always judge from them, especially when they tend to condemn.——[To the Countess.] But, Madam, will your Ladyship be so good as to acquaint us with the particulars of this extraordinary history.——Helen speaks of her father; I did not know she had a father.

COUN. Her father enlisted at eighteen years of age, and set out for the Colonies; it is but six months since he returned; he is in my son's regiment, and applied for leave to come and pass a month in Paris, in the hope of seeing his daughter. The very morning of his arrival, he had a quarrel with one of his comrades, he fought, and left his adversary for dead upon the spot; he escaped, though wounded, and took shelter in a little inn at a distance from hence. He was not in his regimentals, and believing he had killed his enemy, carefully concealed his name and condition. A very long illness, the consequence of his wounds, consumed all his little stock of money; then, when he was reduced to the greatest misery, and not daring to apply to any one, heaven inspired him with the design of entrusting his secret, and his distress, to a child of fifteen, to his own daughter, whom he had never seen; he wrote

to her, and Helen received his letter yesterday.

Mrs. DUP. The dear girl ! This then was the cause of her melancholy, and the tears which she could not conceal. Ah, if she had explained herself to me !

HEL. Alas, Madam, my father expressly forbid me ; he acquainted me with his history ; adding, that Count Oswald was his Colonel, and ordered me to apply to nobody else.

COUN. Judge then, what was Helen's perplexity : my son, in an error, seduced by a passion unworthy of her by whom it was inspired, presumed to declare himself ; several notes and presents sent this very day, left no doubt of his base designs, and injurious hopes, though, however, he had not the rudeness to avow them in his letters. Do not blush, Helen ; I ought to disclose whatever can make your innocence triumph. — In short, Mrs. Duport, this charming girl resolved to write to me, and inform me of all these particulars. My son was with me when I received her letter ; I read it to him, and it was with pleasure I saw that he felt the most lively regret for having insulted a character so truly virtuous. He told me, that the man who fought with Helen's father, a young soldier of the name of Turpin, was dead, that he had only received a slight wound, and refused to declare who it was he fought with. After this explanation, my son left me, my

dear Helen, to go to your father, whom he has brought to my house, and who has told us that you sold every thing you had, and carried him eight guineas. This circumstance affected me the more, as you did not mention it in your letter. At last, burning with impatience to know you, and to embrace you, I came hither, and find you such as to excuse the weakness of my son, to justify his repentance, the shame he feels, and the admiration with which this conduct has inspired us both.

HEL. O, Madam———what goodness!

Mrs. DUP. Poor little dear!——so young, and to act with such wisdom and prudence!

COUN. She had a guide with whom no one ever can go astray; a pure, noble, and feeling heart.

Mrs. DUP. O, how happy will Lady Solange be to hear this!

COUN. The benefactress of Helen ought indeed to be much satisfied. Can she receive a more pleasing reward for all her care and goodness?——Now, Mrs. Dupont, I have one favour to beg of you: will you trust Helen with me for an hour or two? I am going to conduct her to the arms of her father, and I will bring her back to you in the evening.

Mrs. DUP. She shall attend your Ladyship.

HEL. My father?——I am going to see him happy; ah, Madam!

COUN. [taking Helen by the hand.] Yes, my dear child, you shall see him happy.——

You are in worthy hands ; I could do nothing for you, but I may be allowed at least to reward in the father, the virtues of the daughter : come and learn his fate from himself.—

HEL. [kissing the hand of the Countess.] Allow me, Madam.——

COUN. Come, and embrace me, my girl.

HEL. You deign to allow me.——

COUN. Yes ; it is my wish.——

HEL. [rushing into the arms of the Countess.] O, how you comfort my heart !

COUN. Charming creature !——I have the happiness of being a mother, but I have no daughter. O, heaven ! was I not worthy of having one like this child ?——But, come, my dear Helen, your father expects you ; come. Farewell, Mrs. Duport, I shall return before seven o'clock.

Mrs. DUP. Ah, Madam, may heaven shower all its blessings upon you.——I beg leave to follow you to your carriage.——

COUN. With all my heart, dear Mrs. Duport ; give me your arm.——[Taking Mrs. Duport and Helen under the arm.] Come, let us go. [They go out, Silvia following.]

CATH. [to Harriot.] By my faith, here is a fine day for Miss Helen ; one always gains by doing what is right, I see that plainly——Miss Harriot, you are thoughtful ; you are vexed at having spoken so much amiss of Miss Helen ; is not that true ? Marry, we

should not be so anxious to speak ill of our neighbour. — But, let us see them get into the carriage, we will talk of that another time, — [She goes out, Harriot follows her.]

THE END.

THE
BOOKSELLER,

A

COMEDY,

IN ONE ACT.



THE PERSONS.

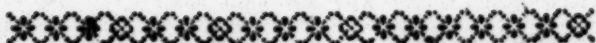
ORMSBY, a Bookseller.

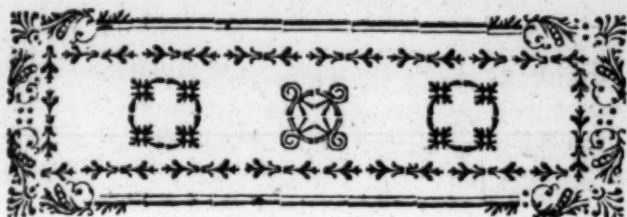
HENRY, fifteen years old, Ormsby's nephew.

LENNOX, a Bookseller, neighbour and friend of Ormsby's.

DRAKEFIELD, a young Author.

Scene at Paris, in Ormsby's house.





THE
BOOKSELLER,
A
COMEDY.

SCENE I.

The Sage represents a Closet.

ORMSBY, [alone, sitting in a Chair, reading
a Manuscript ; after a short silence.]

WHAT an abominable satire! —
Such personalities ! such malevolence ! —
And such disgusting dishonesty. — If my

neighbour Lennox buys this work, he will make a despicable purchase.——The poor man has no knowledge of what our profession requires; but he is still young, and shews a regard for me, therefore I will endeavour at least to serve him by sincere and disinterested advice.——Ha, here he comes.

[Ormsby rises.]

SCENE II.

ORMSBY, LENNOX.

ORM. You come in very good time, for I have this moment finished the reading of the manuscript you entrusted to my care.

LEN. Well, what do you think of it?

ORM. That you will do very wrong to print it, and that the author had better remain anonymous.——

LEN. That he is already determined on; and for my part, I do not know his name.——but tell me, is it a very biting satire?

ORM. It has provoked me excessively.—

LEN. So much the better, my friend, it will sell.

ORM. Yes, but it will not come to a second edition. Contemptible works have only a transitory success; a libel affords a momentary entertainment to the malicious; but disgust immediately follows the guilty frivolous amusement.

LEN. You will at least allow that there is spirit and genius in this little poem?

ORM. I think a work of this kind can only serve to let you know the disposition of the author, and the depravity of his heart and mind; as he always judges with partiality, is never sincere, and sacrifices truth and his own reputation to his mischievous desire of giving pain: it is impossible but he must be constantly inconsistent, and frequently shew a bad taste; in this dark labyrinth, wherein he has been engaged by malevolence, one is lost with the author, and cannot discern either his sentiments or real opinions.

LEN. Pray do you think it an insipid or lively piece?

ORM. In my opinion, it is void of common sense: no doubt there are some good strokes to be found in it: but has not the most indifferent talents fortunate hits sometimes, when every licence is taken, and the author knows no restraint?

LEN. Well, give me back the manuscript.——I shall think seriously upon all you have said.

ORM. [giving him the manuscript.] There it is.——I see plainly that you will purchase

it; I am sorry for you, and I frankly tell you so.

LEN. But, you do not think it badly executed; and the purchase is only thirty guineas.

ORM. My dear, Lennox, to purchase or to print a work, which worthy people cannot read without indignation, is to partake of the faults of the author, and to share in his disgrace. Let me tell you, a Bookseller in such a case is much more criminal than the author himself, since he has neither the illusions of vanity, nor the empty desire of false glory, which can so easily mislead a young writer, to plead in his excuse. This poem, which has been offered to you, mangles without mercy all those who have acquired reputation as men of letters; perhaps, the author is animated by some particular resentments; perhaps, he has reason to be offended with those people whom he treats with such animosity. I know that nothing can vindicate injustice, or being deficient in good manners; and that this kind of revenge is always, especially where the author keeps himself anonymous, an unpardonable meanness. But if such reprisals are odious even in the author, what will be said of the Bookseller, what will be thought of you, who, without blushing can deliberately print a libel against ten people who have done you no injury? Against valuable citizens, distinguished by their abilities, and whom we in particular ought to

honour and respect, since our existence depends upon their labours.—Is it possible, that, without remorse, you can think of distressing them and blackening them in the eyes of that idle croud who examine nothing, and who imagine that by having glanced over a few wretched pamphlets, they are entitled to decide imperiously, and to judge without appeal?

LEN. But you think this little piece will strike home? Morality out of the question, you believe it excellent in its kind?

ORM. [Smiling.] So, that is all of my discourse which strikes you: my reasonings have made a deep impression on your mind!

LEN. My dear Ormsby, you speak of all these things very much at your ease: you are rich, happy, beloved by men of letters, the best works fall in showers upon you.—

ORM. That is very true; but I owe my good fortune to those principles by which I have been hitherto guided, and from which I have never deviated. I have employed no tricks in my dealings with the men of letters; by shewing them respect and deference, with a delicate probity, and scrupulous justice in business, I have deserved their esteem and confidence: the success of a similar conduct is infallible; for a small portion of good sense with an excellent character, always leads to fortune. I think the best of all calculations is to lay down a rule for ourselves to be invariably honest; and in sound policy, that

maxim is particularly applicable to people in our rank of life, to citizens, obliged to choose an art or profession to gain a livelihood. A man of birth enters the world with many splendid advantages, the greatest of which perhaps is, the fortunate prejudice which a good education inspires, and the idea that a gentleman can have none but worthy sentiments. Every prejudice is in his favour; they are all against us: if his principles are not sound, he loses his peace and his reputation; but still he can have recourse to intrigue; a base and uncertain means I must own; however, it is the last hope of a man of fashion in disgrace, and a resource impracticable for us. You see then, that without a spotless reputation, we never gain that confidence and regard which alone can secure the success of our undertakings; and you may depend upon it, that it is not possible they can be acquired without being merited: hypocrisy always discovers itself; the triumph of imposture is short, and its bounds very limited: the honourable title of a worthy man is not to be usurped, and to enjoy it, it must be deserved. So that we have but one certain way to arrive at fortune, that of rectitude and probity; happy and wise is he who never departs from it; he will owe his success to his merit alone, he will feel its value with rapture, and will find inexhaustible consolations even in the bosom of adversity.

LEN. Certainly, your lesson is truly moral; you practise what you teach, and your example should make it valued. But, as I said to you just now, you not only have distinguished merit, but you are fortunate, and there are accidents which you owe only to your kind stars. For instance, that last work which has had such a run, and has been worth so much money to you, was offered to me as well as to you for fifty guineas: I refused it, as I ought in prudence to have done, for I shewed it to a man of abilities, who assured me it was good for nothing. Besides, the author is very young, he is not known, he is from the country; all these reasons determined me to return him his manuscript. He applied to you, and notwithstanding these prudent considerations, you purchased a work that proved fortunate.—Is not that being lucky?

ORM. Do you know why I undertook it? It was because I read it, and I thought it excellent; so that I owe my good fortune, not to my stars, but to my understanding.

LEN. I was persuaded that you was capable of judging of the merits of a pamphlet; but of such a considerable work, so learned, I own I had not that opinion of your knowledge. I must allow that the stars had nothing to do with it; and if I had had your understanding, I should have been more fortunate upon this occasion, since it was to me the manuscript was first offered.—You paid only fifty guineas for it?

ORM. To be sure, that is the price the young man asked.——

LEN. For three large volumes——what a purchase !——

ORM. But, after having read it, I was so greatly surprised at the astonishing genius of the author, that I advised him to print it at his own risk, and offered to advance the necessary expence.

LEN. That is what I did not suspect.

ORM. In short, I printed the work without asking any money from the author ; I have already recovered my expence, and a reasonable profit as Printer ; and the overplus shall go to the author, to whom this work will be worth at least six hundred pounds.—

LEN. However, that is what you might have gained and very lawfully : I beg your pardon, but I think you carry your generosity too far, even to extravagance.—

ORM. I am rich enough to be able, on such an occasion, to gratify my inclination without being guilty of a folly ; besides, I would not have acted in this manner for a man of middling abilities ; and as great talents are rare, it is more than probable I shall not find a second opportunity such as this in the whole of my life. Would you have had me take the advantage of the unfortunate situation, and want of experience in a young author, whose work promised such genius and spirit.—That man will certainly have a distinguished reputation ; will it not be honourable for me

then, to have been the first means of his acquiring it? Do you think he can ever forget it? Don't you believe I am secure of printing all his works? I therefore find my interest as well as my particular satisfaction in what I have done.

LEN. That is true: I have not one word to say against all that—you certainly have attached a man of merit to you for life, and the more so, as I am told that you have been particularly careful in printing his work.

ORM. In that respect I did nothing singular for him, as I always endeavour that there shall be no typographical errors in the works I print.

LEN. No errors!—that is impossible.—

ORM. Yes, when we are inattentive; but no errors should be found in the works of a printer who has been well educated, and who has a laudable zeal to distinguish himself in his profession *.

* Robert Stephens, a Printer, of Paris, who lived in the sixteenth century, and was one of the most learned men of his time in the Greek and Latin languages, set a very high value on the merit of correcting the press; and it is alledged that to accomplish his purpose the more certainly, he exposed the sheets as they came from the press, to the public, and gave a reward to whosoever shewed him

LEN. That requires a very great attention. But I think I see your nephew coming. Farewell, my dear Ormsby; we shall sup together, and I will acquaint you with my determination about this manuscript, for I must give an answer in three hours. Farewell, till the evening.

ORM. Farewell, my friend.

[Lennox goes out.]

ORM. [alone.] It is not difficult to guess his determination; but it is no easy matter to get people of limited understandings to hear reason.

an error. To him we are indebted for many of the finest and most correct editions of the ancients.

SCENE III.

ORMSBY, HENRY, [holding a book.]

ORM. What do you want, Henry?

HEN. I am come to return the book you lent me, uncle, and to beg another.

ORM. Have you taken any extracts from that book?

HEN. Yes, uncle.

ORM. Have you made your own little observations upon the style, the beauties and the defects of the work?

HEN. Yes, Sir.

ORM. Why did you not bring your paper?

HEN. Because it is really good for nothing.

ORM. I expected it, however: you are but fifteen yet, and it cannot be supposed you are already capable of judging by yourself; but by practising in this manner, you may acquire both taste and judgment, since I point out to you where you are deficient.

HEN. Sir, the Abbé has just now left me, and is very well satisfied with my progress in the Latin. —

ORM. It is more particularly necessary that he should be so with your progress in your own language ; for you know, Henry, that I intend you for my own profession : you will succeed to me, and if you do not know your own language perfectly, you will never make a good printer. Besides, if you have not instruction, learning, and taste, how can you judge of the works that will be offered to you ? Every dealer knows the value of the commodities he buys, to carry on his business : if he had not the instruction necessary for his trade, he would soon be infallibly ruined. It is the same with a printer, except that his profession requires a knowledge more difficult to be attained, likewise more eminent, and more deserving of esteem. In short, your godfather, Rowland, cannot be imposed on in the value of a piece of stuff ; and you, my dear Henry, ought to acquire such a knowledge as not to be imposed on in the value of a book.

HEN. No doubt. As for instance, poor Mr. Lennox, from his ignorance, refused that excellent work of Mr. Drakefield's, while you, uncle, did not hesitate to print it, because you knew its merit. Now I have mentioned Mr. Drakefield, I know the reason of his being so melancholy for some days ; it is because his affairs are in disorder. He

brought no recommendations from the country, he is young, he has giddily spent all his money, and is now in distress.

ORM. From whom have you these particulars?

HEN. His servant told it in confidence to our cookmaid: it gives me great uneasiness, Mr. Drakefield is so amiable!—It is true, now that you have recovered the expence of printing, the amount of the remaining copies will be his; but if his situation is so pressing.

ORM. I am pleased to see your anxiety, Henry.—You will always do right to respect abilities; in short, the man who is oppressed by misfortunes, and who adds real worth to superior genius, is, no doubt, an object most deserving of the regard and protection of noble and feeling souls.

HEN. O, Sir, I hear Mr. Drakefield.

ORM. Yes, it is he. Go, my boy, into my chamber, I will be with you in a little time; and we will talk of what you have been reading to-day.

HEN. Yes, uncle. [He goes out.]

SCENE IV.

ORMSBY, DRAKEFIELD.

ORM. [going to meet Drakefield.] You have prevented me, Sir; I intended to call upon you this evening.——

DRA. I came to find you, because I have need of consolation; you are my only friend in this place.——

ORM. I flatter myself that I shall do nothing to make me forfeit a title, which is equally honourable and dear to me.

DRA. Well, here is another new criticism on my work has just made its appearance!——I am provoked, I own.——

ORM. Is it a news-paper criticism?

DRA. No, no; an entire pamphlet, of no less than a hundred pages.——

ORM. I know nothing of it. Then that makes the sixth criticism on your work; this is being tolerably successful for the first attempt.——

DRA. I know very well, it is a received opinion, that none but good works

are criticised ; but I am by no means proud of such success.

ORM. I understand you ; your modesty was such as not to flatter yourself with the hopes of so great an honour.

DRA. You banter, Mr. Ormsby ; but for my part, I am vexed, enraged, and disheartened.——

ORM. I have only one word to reply to you ; in spite of all the criticisms, the sale of your book goes on successfully ; there is already one pirated edition ; I know it is translating into several languages ; what would you have ?

DRA. If you had read the last criticism !——Not one reason, not one serious objection, a continual mockery.——

ORM. What, would you rather wish this criticism was solid, reasonable, and well founded ?

DRA. No, surely ; however, if truth hurts sometimes, it may at least be useful ; but injustice oppresses and disgusts.——

ORM. It should excite nothing but contempt.

DRA. What harm have I done to all these people who mangle me with such obstinate bitterness ?——

ORM. Merit at first rouses envy, but can always disarm it by moderation and modesty.

DRA. No, no, they press me in the extreme ; I will defend myself.——

ORM. How, pray ?

VOL. IV.

Q

DRA. By replying to my adversaries, and retorting that ridicule upon them which they aimed at me. —

ORM. That is just what they wish. You have composed a good work, which not only does honour to your understanding; but likewise gives the most favourable opinion of your morals, your principles, and temper; this valuable production has deservedly obtained for you the favour of all worthy people; and the malice with which you are attacked, only serves to increase such a well-founded esteem. But if you suffer yourself to be misled by blind resentment, and engage in frivolous disputes, or shew that acrimony and unjust irony against your adversaries, which they have employed against you, you will give greater weight and consequence to their writings, and perhaps lose irrecoverably the regard and esteem of the public. Only call to mind that sound philosophy, those expressions of indulgence which are diffused through your work! Would you destroy the flattering idea you have given of yourself? Can you be so imprudent in your conduct as to belie those precepts, which could not have excited so much admiration, but because the author seemed to speak the feelings of his soul? Forgive my age and my attachment for the liberty I take in offering these reflexions; I conjure you to make a better use of your understanding; the best revenge you can take of your enemies is not to lose time in

answering them, but to shew yourself superior to insult and injustice, and employ yourself in a new work which may raise your reputation still higher.

DRA. I receive such prudent counsels with gratitude: they strike me most feelingly. But, however, is it possible to see myself incessantly insulted, without expressing a just resentment?

ORM. Criticisms fall of themselves when an author disdains to reply to them. Besides, one is soon ashamed to pursue him who is resolved to make no defence: in such a case, there is a great meanness in attacking him, and the more so, as the most ungenerous enemy is with-held by the dread of public censure and universal contempt*. But, Sir, since you give me leave to speak to you freely, will you indulge me with the liberty of asking you some questions about your finances? Living in town must have disordered them.

DRK. No matter; I can wait.——

* It is not intended to speak here of any criticisms, but those which are inspired by hatred, polluted by insults, personalities, and dishonesty, and which the bitter and false gaiety of malevolence strives to adorn with every common place irony, and low jests of

ORM. Why will you refuse me the pleasure of advancing some money upon your work. Such a proposal should be the less offensive to your delicacy, as I am the depositary of the funds which belong to you at present, since all the expence is secured, and I have the payment in my own hands.——

DRA. Indeed, Sir, I am penetrated, as I ought to be, with a gratitude, which is as sincere as it is well founded.——How contemptible should I be in my own eyes, if I were capable of abusing such goodness!——It is not my pride that declines your offer; no, I look upon you as a father, you give me the advice of one, and such is your conduct towards me;——but the delicate feelings of the heart exceed those of vanity.——And you have already done so much for me!——

ORM. Exaggerated delicacy is nothing better than whim; an excess produced undoubtedly by a worthy cause, but which reason disapproves, and which friendship by all

that contemptible kind, that require as little of genius and abilities, as the contrary is necessary for true criticism, which is always impartial, moderate, ingenious, and delicate, and is the only criticism that can instruct and correct without offending, improve the taste, and deserve the esteem even of those authors whom it informs and reprove.

means should correct. To tell me, you condescend to look upon me as a father, is to give me privileges, so that I am authorised to put a stop to idle compliments. — I shall send a hundred guineas to your house. But after all, such conduct has nothing in it but what is very natural; I have that money, I lend it to you, and for a very short time; for the sale of your work will probably reimburse me in less than two months.

DRA. I cannot answer you. — I am so deeply affected with your goodness. — Ah, Mr. Ormsby, if you knew the extent of the service you do me! —

ORM. But am I not equally happy and honoured, by having it in my power to give you this small proof of zeal and attachment? —

DRA. [after a moment's reflection.] I ought no longer to conceal any thing from you. — [He takes a manuscript out of his pocket.] Having the most pressing necessity for money, and being provoked by all the criticisms which have been made on my work, I have within these eight days composed a little satirical poem against all those people whom I suspected to be my enemies. —

ORM. A poem in eight days!

DRA. That odious kind of composition is so easy, it neither requires order, plan, nor reason; all that is necessary to be distinguished in that way, is raillery, malice, and unjust

tice. I was much incensed, and with great rapidity executed that work which is a disgrace to my character, and which my heart and my reason disavow. From this moment I abjure a passion of which your wise counsels have shewn the imprudence and the enormity. [He gives him a manuscript.] Here, my respectable Friend, read this contemptible production; I wish you to know how much I am indebted to you; you cannot know it but by glancing over this manuscript, then you truly taste the most pleasing satisfaction of which a good mind is susceptible, that of having reclaimed a good heart to a love of virtue and a sense of its duty.

ORM. [casting his eyes over one manuscript.] What do I see!——I know this work!——Lennox was to have purchased it!——

DRA. Yes, I applied to him, because I knew that he had neither your principles, nor your honesty——Such a satire could not be presented to you without offering you an insult, but Lennox readily determined to become my accomplice; I just now received a message from him to let me know that he would accept my offer. I sent to get back my work, with an intention of returning it to him to-morrow, after making some alterations. My good fortune brought me to you; your counsels have enlightened my understanding, and persuaded my heart; your friendship has extricated me from distress;

you have preserved my reputation, and, in short, you have saved me from the insufferable pain and dreadful remorse which my fault must have occasioned.

ORM. O, how I congratulate myself for having merited your confidence!—This work—which would have ruined you—I have read.

DRA. You have read!

ORM. How unworthy your talents, that excellence, and that sensibility for which you are so distinguished!—

DRA. I feel it.—That first error would have led me into a thousand more, and abandoned me to all the excesses of hatred and injustice. You have driven from my heart those gloomy emotions by which it was agitated. I cannot think without shuddering, that I was on the eve of ruining all my principles!—But, now, I am only animated with a desire of distinguishing myself by equity, moderation, and generosity; it shall be my pride to do justice to my enemies; the laudable desire of shewing my impartiality, will make it no pain to me to praise them.—I raise myself above them, I can no longer hate them.—Alas! notwithstanding that absurd railing, perhaps their hearts were formed for virtue!—What would have become of me if I had not had a friend!

ORM. What delightful emotions do I owe to you! What exquisite pleasure do I taste at

this instant in seeing peace, the happy fruit of moderation, and amiable and mild complacency, the inseparable companion of justice and generosity, springing up again in that noble mind!—But my nephew waits for me in my apartment, let us go and set him at liberty, and then we will resume this interesting conversation.

DRA. But we will begin by burning this manuscript, upon which I cannot cast my eyes without blushing.——

ORS. How much you will applaud yourself one day for this estimable sacrifice!——

DRA. I am already rewarded by your esteem; let us no longer delay.—Come.—

ORM. May every author informed of his true interest, always adopt such noble sentiments! [They go out.]

THE END.

THE

TRULY WISE MAN.

A

COMEDY,

IN TWO ACTS.



THE PERSONS.

OVERFORD, a merchant retired from business.

VALENTINE, son of Overford.

• RENFORTH, a young physician, and a relation of Overford's.

Sir JOHN BEAUFORT, a neighbour of Overford's.

ANDREW, a young peasant.

PETER, Overford's servant.

The Scene is in Overford's country-house.





T H E
TRULY WISE MAN.

A C O M E D Y.

On est heureux dès qu'on est sage.

CARDINAL DE BERNIS.

A C T I.

SCENE FIRST.

The Stage represents a large House.

Sir JOHN, PETER.

Sir JOHN.

THE worthy Mr. Overford is not here?

PET. No, Sir; he is gone to the farm, to

see poor Eustace, who was thought to be dying.

Sir JOHN. Eustace, the father of Clara?

PET. The same. Doctor Renforth, a young physician, a relation of my master's, has recovered him.

Sir JOHN. And Valentine, where is he?

PET. Along with his father.

Sir JOHN. I long impatiently to see Valentine.——

PET. That is very natural, when, as we may say, you were brought up together.

Sir JOHN. Yes, my uncle, had a great value for the plain honesty of Mr. Overford——who is besides a man well informed——of deep reflection!——

PET. My Lord, your uncle, was a worthy man; my master has greatly lamented the loss of him.

Sir JOHN. Peter, tell me a little of Clara; is she as handsome as ever?

PET. By my faith, six months or so, has not made her ugly; on the contrary.——

Sir JOHN. I remember, I thought her admirable.——I had never seen any thing.——But, I believe, living six months in Paris, makes the taste more delicate.——

PET. It is said, however, that the Parisians are painted; for my part I don't think I should like that; it would, perhaps, make me think the country girls too pale, so that I should

gain nothing on one side, and should certainly lose on the other. — That would be a bad bargain. — This makes me recollect what I once heard my master say ; that what refines the taste too much, ends in depraving it. —

Sir JOHN. According to that maxim, taste is here in all its purity ; for certainly, I know nothing less refined than the gentlemen of this country.

PET. I think I hear my master, —

Sir JOHN. Yes, indeed, here he comes. —

[Peter goes out.]

SCENE II.

Sir JOHN BEAUFORT,
OVERFORD, VALENTINE,
RENFORTH.

Sir JOHN. Good day, Mr. Overford—
good day, Valentine.——

VAL. You here!——What an agreeable
surprise!——[He advances to embrace
him.]

Sir JOHN. [draws gently back, does not
embrace him, but offers him his hand.] I
am truly happy to see you.——

VAL. [aside.] What a cold recepti-
on!——

OVER. [to Sir John.] We knew nothing
of your return.——

Sir JOHN. I only came on Sunday—
and I don't propose to stay any time; till
my house is in order, I shall not be much in
this part of the country.——

OVER. It is grand——and furnished most
magnificently.——

Sir JOHN. It is not habitable. — — I shall have it pulled down.

OVERS Pulled down !

Sir JOHN. [laughing.] It is a murder ? — — is it not ? — — And these gardens, so much admired in this country, that fine elm-tree-walk, those majestic chestnut trees, must all be cut down. — Am I not very unmerciful ? And quite original ?

OVER. Original ! O, no, by no means. — — I see nothing but what is very common in your projects. Is not your purpose to lay out a great deal of money to convert a great garden into a little farm ? — —

Sir JOHN. Just so ; in one word into an English garden. — —

OVER. And to change a palace into a cot ? — —

Sir JOHN. Precisely. — —

OVER. Well, Sir, and in all this you conform to the present taste ; it is not without injustice, then, that you can be accused of singularity, since you are only an imitator. — But, Doctor Renforth, we still have time to make our little tour round the village, before the hour appointed to shoot for the prize. —

Sir JOHN. What tour ?

Dr. REN. We are going to visit the poor sick people. —

Sir JOHN, [to Renforth.] It is very well for you that are a physician, but what has Mr. Overford to do there ?

REN. Sir, he pays for the broths and the medicines I prescribe.

Sir JOHN. It seems to me quite natural to give the money, but that he should carry it himself——

REN. They give much less who are satisfied with sending.

VAL. The unfortunate must be seen, to procure for them that degree of attention and compassion which they deserve !——

Sir JOHN. Did you not say, that there is a prize to be shot for with bow and arrow to-day ?

VAL. Yes, given by my father.

Sir JOHN. I am mighty glad of it, I will go and see it.

OVER. I hope then, Sir, you will allow me to leave you for an hour.

Sir JOHN. Treat me as a neighbour, I pray you, Mr. Overford, no ceremony, if you please.

OVER. My son then shall do himself the honour to fill my place, since you think proper. Come, Doctor.

[He goes out, and Renforth follows him.]

S C E N E III.

Sir JOHN, VALENTINE.

Sir JOHN. I do not know this Dr. Renforth.

VAL. He practised physic successfully for two or three years at Lyons, and being desirous to settle in Paris, my father was of some assistance to him; he is now come to acknowledge it, and to pass six weeks in the country.

Sir JOHN. Your father makes an excellent use of his fortune.—But, Valentine, after an absence of seven months, I have a thousand questions to ask.—You do not mention Clara——Ha, ha, you blush; well, you still love her then?

VAL. What, can you suppose I could have changed in so short a time!——

Sir JOHN. So short a time! seven months! your ideas of the duration of a passion, are

quite the style of the country.—And is Clara acquainted with your love?

VAL. You will laugh at me.—Twenty times I have intended to mention it to her, but I never had courage.

Sir JOHN. The daughter of a farmer, indeed, a little peasant girl of sixteen, is a very awful personage.

VAL. Yes, indeed; for virtue and innocence are always so. Besides, the condition of Clara has nothing in it contemptible, especially for me, since my birth is not superior to her's.

Sir JOHN. Love makes you very modest.—However, you may observe there is one little difference between you and Clara, which is, that you will one day have five thousand a-year.

VAL. They must be very humble in other respects, who have only that advantage to be proud of.

Sir JOHN. How! very humble!

VAL. Yes, indeed; he who looks upon his fortune as the true means of succeeding, certainly has little dependance on the qualities of his mind and temper.—

Sir JOHN. Your sentiments are quite romantic; and truly, my dear Valentine, you were born to be the swain of a shepherdess.—But, all joking apart, I wish to serve you in your country amours. Tell me, don't you come to Paris next winter?

VAL. Yes, that is my father's intention. I own I am sorry for it; I shall leave this place with regret.—I have been brought up in this house, and have never quitted it.

Sir JOHN. And you have no curiosity to see Paris?

VAL. Not the least.——

Sir JOHN. O, I know the reason very well.——But, if I should tell you that I can easily contrive a way to make Clara come to Paris?

VAL. That is impossible.——

Sir JOHN. I am sure I can.

VAL. By what means?

Sir JOHN. That is my secret. You have affection, and I have genius and discretion; but you shall not know my means till I have succeeded.——

VAL. But are you not joking?

Sir JOHN, [in a very serious manner.] O fy, in an affair of that importance, an affair of the heart.——

VAL. I don't know how it is, but you have brought a certain air and manner from Paris, which makes you very unlike what you were.

Sir JOHN, [smiling.] I really believe, indeed, I am a little changed.

VAL. O, very much.

Sir JOHN. You frighten me.—Can I have entirely lost that ease, that graceful

country manner, of which, however, I am still a sincere admirer?

VAL. O! I love that language much better; till now I did not really know whether you were in jest or in earnest; I have no longer any doubts.——

Sir JOHN. You take what I say for railery, perhaps?——How foolish!——I am but a simple kind of man, am not I?——

VAL. I believe that in truth you are entitled to appear so.

Sir JOHN, [laughing aloud.] Entitled to appear so! there is wit.——[Very seriously.] Yes, Sir, I am so entitled——I avow it.——

VAL. I must think so; for, like an honest man, you disclaim all art, and shew yourself truly what you are.

Sir JOHN. So, Valentine——you are taking your revenge I believe.——Well, I foretold it;——your wit will not be without edge, and that considerable.——But now let us talk seriously. [In a serious and important manner.] In truth, I ardently desire; I say, ardently, to see you settled in Paris. Your father has given you an excellent education, that Abbé, the man who had the care of you, was a man of merit——and you have perfectly justified his expectations. You may enjoy a very agreeable life at Paris——and I have already preposessed all my friends in your favour.——In one word, I undertake to introduce you.——But your

father must keep an excellent house——situated as you are, it is indispensable.——You must have a number of horses, boxes at the play-house and opera, play deep, and I promise you the most brilliant connections, and all the pleasures which I myself enjoy.

VAL. What do you call brilliant connections ?

Sir JOHN. Every body knows that——connections with people of distinguished rank and birth.

VAL. With those who are so by their worth and understanding, is what one ought to desire.——

Sir JOHN, [in a contemptuous manner.] Very good——However, my dear Valentine, in your situation, it would be very flattering.——

VAL. What, to be admitted into the most brilliant society ? If I owe that favour to my own merit, well and good : but if I am to be indebted for it to a supper and idle expences, I shall be but very little flattered by it.——No, no, I shall make no advances to a man who is of a rank above me, and I shall not desire the honour of forming an intimacy with him, but so far as he appears to me to be deserving esteem. He who in my rank lets himself be seduced by a high sounding name, deserves to be sought after only for his fortune. I hope I shall not be so ridiculous,

nor have the absurd extravagance to ruin myself by meanness.

Sir JOHN. All this philosophy will give way to the desire of shewing yourself in good company.

VAL. Good company! — I shall certainly endeavour to find it; but it is not confined to one circle; it is, wherever good morals, taste, and understanding are to be found.

Sir JOHN. The air of Paris will soon make you change your opinion.

VAL. I will not deny that Paris may spoil a young man; but at the same time, I believe, that a sound understanding can preserve good sense and reason in every place. —

S C E N E I V .

Sir JOHN, VALENTINE, PETER.

PET. Mr. Overford sent to know, gentlemen, if you would come and see the shooting match.

VAL. Are they going to begin?

PET. In half an hour, and the Square is already full of people——the fight is charming.——

Sir JOHN. Come, Valentine, let us go there.

VAL. With all my heart, I follow you.

[They go out.]

PET. By Gemini, the knight has not improved by his journey, however; he was formerly courteous and affable; it is not so now.——He has got such a haughty air, and is such a sneerer!——I'll engage he has but a shallow understanding, for he can only have a mean genius, who could change so from good to bad in seven months! But somebody comes, O, 'tis Andrew.

SCENE V.

PETER, ANDREW.

PET. Andrew, what accident prevents you from being at the Square?

AND. O, I have time enough,——the shooting don't begin till twelve, and I shall hear the clock from hence.——Tell me, Mr. Peter, where does the Doctor live?

PET. What, with that florid countenance would you go and consult a Doctor?

AND. No, no, I have no need, and I am almost sorry for it, since I am told that he gives his prescriptions gratis.

PET. Yes, faith, it is very unlucky not to have a few good diseases to take advantage of the occasion.

AND. Yes, marry; I may be taken ill after he is gone, and that would be unlucky.

PET. Well but what have you to say to him?

AND. I want to thank him.

PET. For what, pray?

AND. For curing Eustace.——O, what a miracle he has wrought!——Eustace, who was in such a dying condition, he has set him upon his two legs as if nothing had been the matter with him.——He is come with Clara to see the shooting.

PET. But Eustace is nothing to thee?

AND. Alas, no indeed.——But however, he is the father of Clara.

PET. Ha, ha, now I understand you.——Clara has touched your heart?

AND. For the love of God, Mr. Peter, don't spread such a report.——Eustace is rich, do you see, and I have nothing; and perhaps I must be obliged to renounce Clara.

PET. Tell me, in confidence, does she love thee?

AND. You won't tattle?

PET. No, I promise thee; I only wish to serve you with my master, so you have nothing to fear.

AND. Well, then, I will tell you all.—It came about in this manner; I am a neighbour of Eustace's, and seeing Clara such a pretty girl, I always found some pretence for going to their house, sometimes for one thing, sometimes for another.——Neighbour, I come to beg a bit of live coal. Neighbour, I come to light our lamp.——This went on all the winter——and then in summer,

came on the dancing under the great elm.— I always danced with Clara, I durst not speak to her, but I looked at her with all my eyes, and I thought she blushed when I gazed only for two minutes. I said to myself this is a good sign, and that gave me courage. By my faith, I made a bold venture, and I whispered some little loving words.— She seemed surprised.— Come, come, Mr. Andrew, you want a laugh.— No, by my faith, Clara. Upon which, she grew thoughtful, and said to me; Do not speak to me; speak to my father; and then she left me. Since that time she is quite serious, she flies me; however, it is only with her feet she avoids me, for she looks after me with her eyes— and thus we converse without speaking a word. I plainly see, she thinks of me, and to find her so wise and prudent has only redoubled my affection. Now, Mr. Peter, that is my situation at present.—

PET. And you dare not apply to her father?

AND. No—for if he refuses, it will kill me.

PET. Be easy, I will engage my young master in your favour.—

AND. Ah, what an excellent thought.— Our young master is so humane! — and then I believe he wishes well to Clara.

PET. Hush; don't I hear the clock?—

AND. Yes, indeed!

PET. Come, let us go to the square;
have you your bow?

AND. Yes, I left it at the gate.——
O, I wish I could gain the prize, for cer-
tainly Clara would be glad to see me the
best shooter.

PET. Come, my boy, Love conquers all
things. [They go out.]

A C T II.

S C E N E I.

OVERFORD, RENFORTH.

OVERFORD.

TH E -innocent joy of all these good country folks gives me the greatest pleasure.

REN. That of Andrew is particularly lively.——

OVER. That is quite natural; he has gained the prize; he is the hero of the day!

REN. How you must enjoy all this!——
What happiness can be compared to that of a rich and benevolent man living upon his own estate?

OVER. These delightful enjoyments of a feeling mind, you may taste in your situation, my dear Renforth; preserve that estimable humanity, without which the most able physician cannot discharge his sacred duties but imperfectly. He should lament those distempers he undertakes to cure; he must be led by compassion to the poor who are destitute of help; it is that alone which can make him employ all the resources of his art, and preserve him from a criminal negligence, or a disheartening harshness; it is that tender emotion which can make him discover the means of comforting and encouraging the sick, and restore hope to the heart oppressed with fear and dejected by melancholy!—What a sublime profession when it is worthily exercised. Can there be any thing more heroic for a man, than to dedicate his talents, his labours, and his life to alleviate the sufferings of his fellow-creatures?—Quackery, pedantry, and ridiculous presumption, have but too frequently brought that noble profession into contempt; but an able, compassionate physician, who loves his duty, is undoubtedly a most respectable character, and the one which best deserves the gratitude and admiration of all mankind.

REN. It was by your generosity, Sir, I was enabled to embrace the profession which I preferred to all others, and your counsels teach me how to distinguish myself. Depend

upon it, Sir, that your instructions and your favours never shall be effaced from my remembrance.

OVER. I depend upon your friendship, my dear Renforth, and the satisfaction I shall have in meeting you in Paris, will greatly soften the regret I must feel in quitting this agreeable retreat.

REN. You propose to set out the end of autumn?

OVER. Yes, and certainly I cannot make a greater sacrifice to my son, for it is on his account alone that I renounce the sweets of such a quiet peaceable life. He has passed his early days far from tumult and corruption; but with the fortune he is to have, it is impossible but he must one day live in the fashionable world, and therefore it is necessary he should be made acquainted with it. I will at least have an eye upon his conduct, I shall serve as a guide to him on his outset, and I shall choose a valuable wife for him. I am already old; if I delay it much longer, I shall, perhaps, not have it in my power to execute those intentions which are so near my heart. These, my friend, are the reasons which prevent me from delaying my departure.

REN. It seems to me, that your son is grieved at this unexpected resolution.

OVER. I believe it; he has those virtues and that plain taste which make him prefer

the country. Besides, I suspect a secret cause contributes likewise to attach him to this place.

REN. I own to you I have the same opinion, and Clara is so uncommonly beautiful!

OVER. I am persuaded that he is in love with her.

REN. And I suspect the knight is his rival, or will soon become such; for he seemed to me to be so exceedingly struck just now with her figure.

OVER. I hear my son; I must absolutely come to an explanation with him.

REN. Here he comes; I leave you.—

[He goes out.]

OVER. Valentine is ingenuous; I am certain he will answer all my questions without disguise.

SCENE II.

OVERFORD, VALENTINE.

OVER. Come hither, Valentine ; I want to have some conversation with you, and to profit by the present moment now that we are alone. But tell me first of all, what you think of the knight ? The friendly kindness his respectable uncle shewed me, formed a connection between that young man and you, upon which I never depended ; and you see, Valentine, that I have not been mistaken.

VAL. Certainly, Sir, the knight is totally changed in his conduct to me. Instead of that friendship and confidence he used to shew me, I only find him cold and haughty, with an air of raillery, or of patronage, which wounds and chills me.

OVER. The knight has no character ; he is deficient in genius, and has all the childish vanity of a very limited understanding : I formerly told you that he would blush one day

for having given the title of intimate friend to a man without birth. He makes you feel it, he grieves, and perhaps mortifies you ; there is the inconvenience, my son, of attaching ourselves to people of a rank above us, when they have not those qualities, and that understanding, which alone can prevent us from dreading the caprice and inconstancy of a contemptible frivolous pride.

VAL. Surely, Sir, thanks to the principles I have derived from your instruction, I shall never blush on account of my birth ; but in the mean time, I cannot endure disdain, however unjust the cause : must I then, to avoid that, lay it down as a rule to myself, never to live but with people of my own rank ?

OVER. No, by no means ; every valuable person who receives you, will deserve to be sought after by you, whatever is his rank. Never forget that you are the son of a merchant, that you owe your fortune to an amazing concurrence of lucky circumstances : preserve your modesty, keep an agreeable house and a good table ; but pretend not to parade or magnificence ; if you shew yourself intoxicated by your wealth, it will only serve to make you ridiculous and contemptible : in regard to your conduct with people of quality, I have one thing in particular to recommend to you, which is to behave to them always with the most attentive politeness ;

that is the only way to obtain their regard: too much ease and familiarity, so far from placing you on a level with them, would quickly cause you to feel that distance which you thought to lessen, and would draw upon you from them a rude familiarity, which you could not return, without entirely forgetting yourself and offending them.

VAL. I am sensible, Sir, what necessary qualities moderation and candour are, especially in my situation: you will always deign to be my guide, and I flatter myself, that with such instructions I can never go astray: but I am very young, I am only eighteen; the chief quality, at my age, you have often told me, is the distrust of one's self, which alone may preserve to us all the rest.—Why expose me so early to the dangers of the world?—before my reason is quite perfected?

OVER. These modest fears do you honour; but are they the only motives, my son, for the regret you feel at quitting the country?—Why do you blush?

VAL. I own to you, Sir, I am pleased with remaining here.

OVER. It is alledged, though I can scarcely believe it, that Clara is the chief cause of your attachment to this place.—I have too good an opinion of your morals and probity, to be

easily persuaded that you can have the infamous design of seducing a modest virtuous young girl, and disgracing a worthy family ; you, whose father is the landlord of these respectable people, you who should be their protector and pattern.

VAL. Alas, Sir, I have no design.—— I respect her innocence——but I own that I could not resist the seducing charms of her person.

OVER. What, could not reason triumph over a culpable caprice, which must of necessity debase you ?

VAL. Debase me !—Why so ?—Does not beauty and virtue justify love ?

OVER. What ; do you propose to marry Clara ?

VAL. I told you before, Sir, that I had no design—but in fact, there is no real distance to be found between Clara and me. Can a citizen dishonour himself by marrying the daughter of an honest farmer ?—She is beautiful, she is prudent ; if I love her, and am loved by her, what cause in the eye of reason can make her unworthy of me ?

VAL. Her want of education :—That is the most remarkable, and the most essential inequality that can exist among men. We should respect the distinctions established in society ; it is pride rather than philosophy

which undervalues them; the truly wise man acknowledges them all, he is the friend of order, the exact observer of decorum, and never seems to despise the rights of rank and birth. I know very well that titles have no advantage but what is derived from prejudice, and therefore require nothing but an exterior homage from me, an empty trifling form; but the true superiority which commands esteem and impresses respect, is what a good understanding, instruction, and accomplishments can give; a good education, in short, which reconciles the most distant classes of men by the charms of conversation, the most pleasing and useful tie by which they can be united. This advantage, which you possess, my son, and which does not depend either upon fashion or custom, secures to you an admission every where, and prejudice apart, makes you the equal of every reasonable thinking being. You see then what real disproportion exists between you and Clara. Tell me, would you choose for your friend and confident a man of the most profound ignorance, void of knowledge and instruction, and equally a rustic in his language and manners? No, certainly. And do you think the choice of a wife of less importance? She who is destined never to leave you, she whose vices or virtues will be a disgrace or an honour to you; she, in short, who is to rear your children? — Woe to him who in form-

ing that lasting and respectable chain considers only the transitory charms of a fine person ; bitter repentance, and the just contempt of the world, will very soon punish him for that blameable folly ! — But somebody comes to interrupt us, we shall resume the conversation another time.

S C E N E III.

OVERFORD, VALENTINE, PETER.

PET. [to Overford.] Sir, Goodman Eustace wants to speak with you. —

OVER. What does he want ?

PET. I don't know, Sir, but he seems much grieved : and I just now met Clara all in tears.

OVER. Where is Eustace ? —

PET. Upon the terrace, Sir. —

OVER. Well, I am going to him. —
[He goes out.]

SCENE IV.

VALENTINE, PETER.

VAL. Hear me, Peter—Did Clara speak to you?—

PET. O yes—I am her confident.——

VAL. Indeed!—Well—what did she say to you? why is she in tears?—

PET. That I do not know; she would not let me know the cause of her vexation.

VAL. But you are her confident; what did she say?

PET. You are more interested in it than you think for, Sir.——

VAL. [disturbed.] What is it you mean to say?

PET. Truly, she would not have confessed all, but because she knew of your kindness to me, and that I had promised her my protection.——

VAL. [anxiously.] Well, go on, Peter.

PET. I am going to tell you some silly things.—The poor girl's head is turned—except in this, she is innocent and simple as the new-born babe.——

VAL. [with impatience.] Come to the point——

PET. Well then, she has given her little heart away.——

VAL. [in great emotion.] She is in love?—

PET. O, if you knew how she blushed to confess it.—How she twisted her apron, and made up her pretty little mouth!—with her eyes cast down, and the great tears shining across her large black eye-lashes—I think she never looked so pretty—she was excessive handsome.——

VAL. And----did she name---the person?

PET. Name him!---O she would not have pronounced his name for a kingdom----I examined her; and she only answered from time to time, speaking between her teeth, and very low: Yes, Mr. Peter---That is true, Mr. Peter——Thank you, Mr. Peter.

VAL. Well?

PET. So Sir, you want to know the object of her love, don't you?---By my faith, she has no bad taste.---It is young Andrew.

VAL. Andrew!

PET. The same; he who gained the prize to-day; he is a jolly well-made young fellow, and the handsomest youth in the village; besides, he is very good, prudent, and well-disposed---never goes to the public-house, works from morn till night to support an old grandmother and two sisters who live upon him, and to whom he gives all his earnings; and with all this, in constant good humour, and loves Clara with all his soul.

VAL. [rousing from a deep reverie.] You are sure that she loves Andrew?

PET. O yes indeed, very sure----and both she and Andrew hope that you, Sir, will protect their loves.——

VAL. I hear Sir John Beaufort---go, Peter, and tell Clara that I shall endeavour to procure her happiness.——

PET. Many thanks to you, Sir, I will go directly and carry this joyful news to our lovers.——[He goes out.]

VAL. [alone.] She loves Andrew! a peasant!---Peter said she was in tears!---Andrew, without any effort has won her heart, while all my cares passed unnoticed!---Ah, I see that love cannot exist without a conformity of dispositions!---I was even mistaken in my own sentiments!---It is fortunate that I have discovered such a dangerous error before it could lead me astray!——

S C E N E V.

Sir JOHN, VALENTINE.

Sir JOHN. I was looking for you, Valentine. — I have been thinking of you ever since I left you---I have seen Clara, and explained to her the project I had formed to make her come to Paris, but you must speak to her, for that little girl is as simple and foolish, as she is handsome, and—

VAL. Let us quit that subject, I pray you ; I no longer think of Clara : my father has made me sensible of the inconveniencies of such an improper passion, and I sincerely renounce it.

Sir JOHN. Really ?

VAL. Nothing can be more certain.

Sir JOHN. Well, if that be the case, Clara will come to Paris only on my account, and I will take upon me to console her for your having changed.

VAL. You may depend upon it her father never will consent to her going.

Sir JOHN. I shall not think his consent absolutely necessary.

VAL. What, surely you do not propose to carry her off ?

Sir JOHN. Carry her off, you make me laugh —that expression can't be applied to a little creature of her rank. One may carry off a lady of fashion, but lead away a peasant.

VAL. Very well; so according to you, violence changes its name when it is employed only against the weak?----I own that precisely in such a case, it seems to me, that abuse of power, and hope of impunity, stamps the deed with the character of meanness, which adds to its heinousness. —

Sir JOHN. You are quite in the tragic strain. —Clara is not made to live in a cottage, I want to introduce her to the world, and to make her fortune: are these such great crimes. ---Besides, from the measures I mean to take? her father will no longer have any authority over her; I shall get her name entered in the opera in quality of a dancer.

VAL. A dancer!----Clara!----you joke; how will they receive her?--- She cannot dance. —

Sir JOHN. No matter for that, it is done every day, it is a most ingenious method which has been discovered, of enticing a pretty girl from the capricious authority of obscure parents. —A wealthy citizen indeed may recover his right, but can that possibly be obtained by a poor rustic, who is equally clownish and ignorant, and confined to his cottage for life?

VAL. Surely you are not serious?

Sir JOHN. I give you my word of honour I am not joking.----This custom of having little girls entered upon the opera list who cannot dance, is perfectly established, and as I told you, with the view of delivering them from the authority of their parents. Even I that now speak to you, have had two dancers received, that never danced two steps of a rigadon in their lives ; the one is the daughter of a milk-woman, and the other of a person who lets out chaises to hire—a couple of pining girls of fifteen, very pretty, but less captivating however, and less blooming than Clara.

VAL. What, will government suffer vice and filial rebellion to find a certain asylum, an impenetrable refuge, from paternal authority ? An unhappy young girl of fifteen, a child led astray by an infamous seducer, shall allow herself to be carried thither, and her unhappy mother not be suffered to wrest her from thence ?---No, if it is true that such a vile disgraceful abuse can exist, it is too disgusting, and too evidently violates the most sacred rights of nature, not to be checked sooner or later.

Sir JOHN. You undoubtedly forget, Mr. Valentine, that this energetic declamation attacks me personally : it is true, all that pathos will neither shock nor convert me ; but from the regard I still have for you, I wish to believe, that the customs of the world will strip you of

the pedantry of the college, and make you more discreet in your expressions.

VAL. Too great heat may have hurried me beyond discretion, and I may perhaps learn not to yield to it imprudently, but I hope I shall always retain the sentiments by which it is inspired.

Sir JOHN. There is one piece of knowledge I would particularly recommend to you, which may serve you instead of many others, and save you from some disagreeable consequences.—Learn then not to forget to whom you speak—and who you are.

VAL. I shall always remember it, and never blush at it. I am the son of a merchant, who by his talents, his labours and his probity, has acquired a considerable estate; and whose moderation and benevolence have deserved the esteem of the public, and have even annihilated that mean secret envy, which too often the poor and proud nobility bear to the happiness of the man who has made his own fortune. So that, Sir, when rage and resentment have nothing to reproach me with but my birth, I shall be out of the reach of their insults, and of every humiliation. The blood which has given me life is not illustrious, but it is pure, at least it has transmitted into my heart, a regard for morals, a love of virtue, and a detestation of vice and bad principles.

Sir JOHN. Indeed, Mr. Valentine, this grows

too pleasant, too comical to give me any uneasiness.—You have truly a great flow of words, and a surprising emphasis!----I am by no means fit to contend with you, but I must honestly confess to you, that I do not remember one word of your long harangue, if it is not that you have pure blood, invincible horror, and excessive compassion for the pretty dancers of fifteen---these young unhappy creatures, as you call them!----It is charming! ---delightful!----By Jove you will have prodigious success at Paris with that manner; what reformation you will work!----We shall have no more unhappy young creatures, I foresee that; we libertines shall be scorned, shamefully expelled. For my part I am already mauled in a very severe manner.----To retire is my only expedient, and therefore I shall prudently have recourse to it.---Farewell, my dear Valentine, without the least animosity, I assure you, for you have given me too good a story to tell, not to pardon its singularity.---[He takes some steps to go out.]

VAL. [aside.] How could such cold childish irony ever be thought stinging or spirited?

SCENE VI.

OVERFORD, Sir JOHN, VALEN-
TINE.

OVER. [stopping Sir John.] I beg the favour, Sir John, that you will be so good as to afford me one moment's conversation.

Sir JOHN. Pray what is it about, Mr. Overford?

OVER. It is what I should not take the liberty to mention to you, if it was not that my son seems to be concerned in it. My tenant Eustace, has just now been to tell me that you have proposed to Clara to carry her to Paris, and to get her entered at the opera; adding, that my son had desired you to interpose in the business.

VAL. Who, I, Sir? I, am persuaded you will not believe any such thing. Sir John has made that strange proposal without consulting me; when he communicated it to me, I did not conceal my sentiments on the subject.

Sir JOHN, [confused.] I protest, Sir, I meant nothing but in jest!—It is very extraordinary,

that this little girl should take the alarm from a careless expression—it was nothing but gaiety -- mere levity.---I did not think it of the least importance---and even with you just now, Valentine, I diverted myself with teasing you, but really it was nothing but raillery---for seriously, I swear to you, I absolutely think as you do. I beg, Mr. Overford, you will remove any apprehensions Clara or her father may have from my pretended bad designs. Adieu, Mr. Overford, I will come and enquire how you do before I set out.----Valentine, I hope we shall have at least one day's hunting.----[He moves some steps, and Overford going to attend him.] You joke surely ; I pray you don't mind me ; between friends and neighbours ceremony should be banished. Adieu, my dear Valentine.
[He goes out.]

SCENE VII.

OVERFORD, VALENTINE.

VAL. Well, he is at least sensible of his faults, since he is desirous to disavow them : it was your respectable presence, Sir, that made him blush : I am sorry you did not give him a little advice.

OVER. It would have been misplaced. To those people who are nothing to us, we ought not to offer any but by our example.

VAL. But, Sir, may I presume to ask you if Clara thought the knight's proposal came from me ?

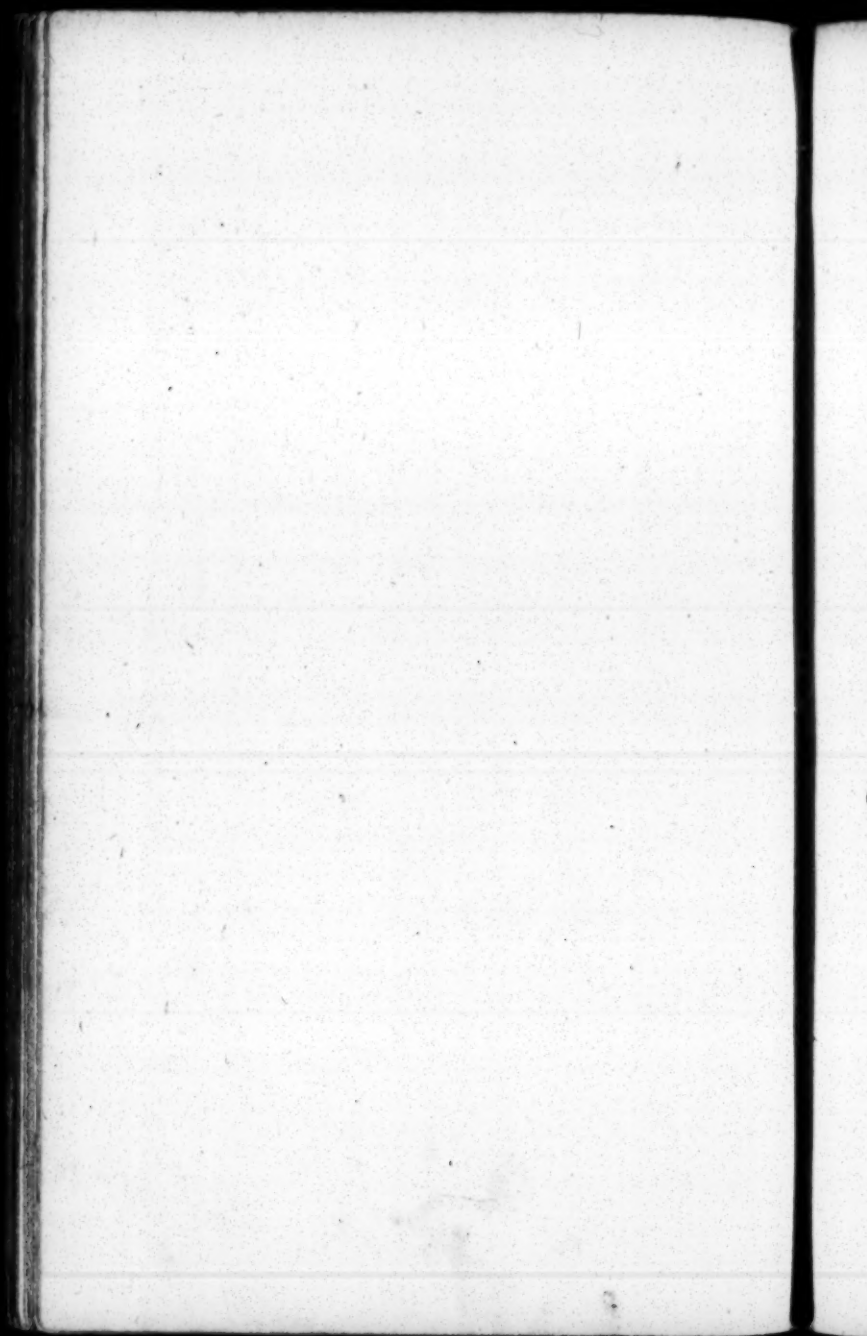
OVER. No, no, neither she nor her father could believe it, and the rather, as Sir John spoke only for himself, and did not even name you, till towards the end of the conversation, and without mentioning that you were in love with Clara. That young girl received his proposal with the tears of insulted innocence, and the greatest contempt ; and instantly declared the whole to her father.

VAL. I have discovered that she loves Andrew ; will you permit me, Sir, to give the

young man five hundred pounds, that Eustace may consent to their union.

OVER. [embracing his son.] This is acting like yourself, my son!—You cannot do a more worthy action; you will find your reward in the happiness of two worthy families—and by the pleasing satisfaction with which this generous deed inspires your happy father.—I wish to share in it; I undertake to provide the wedding cloaths, and defray the expence of the nuptials. Come, let us go and acquaint them with this good news, they are still assembled in the garden, where they are dancing; come, my dear son. [They go out.]

T H E E N D.



THE
PORTRAIT:
OR, THE
GENEROUS RIVALS:
A COMEDY,
IN THREE ACTS.
U 2



THE PERSONS.

Mrs. DENNISON.

DIANA, Daughter of Mrs. Dennison.

OVERFORD.

VALENTINE, Son of Overford.

CLEANTES, a Friend of Mrs. Dennison's
and Overford's.

The MARQUIS of LINFORD, Friend of
Valentine's, in love with Diana.

FANNY, Servant to Mrs. Dennison.

Scene at Paris, in the House of Mrs. Dennison.





THE
PORTRAIT:
OR, THE
GENEROUS RIVALS:
A COMEDY.

—Ma chi puo mai, si ben dissimular gli affetti fui
Che gli asconda per sempre occhi altrui?

METASTASIO.

A C T I.
SCENE FIRST.

[The Stage represents a Saloon.]

OVERFORD, CLEANTES, FANNY.

OVERFORD, [to Fanny.]

MRS. Dennison and her daughter are
gone opt, you say.

FAN. Yes, Sir, about an hour ago; so that I suppose they will very soon be back.

CLE. Is Miss Diana gone to Lady St. German's?

FAN. Yes, Sir, she is gone there, and thank God this is the last sitting—that lady always provokes Miss Diana most terribly—This is the third time she has made her begin her picture, for she would not have any of the two first, because they were as like her as two drops of water. You know her, Mr. Cleantes?

CLE. Lady St. German's? Yes, I saw her here the first time of her sitting.

FAN. Well, she is always saying; the eyes are too small, the mouth too large, the complexion is too brown—but by my faith, now she is very well pleased, for Miss Diana has made her so fair and so pretty, that nobody in the world would know it to have been done for her. That is what pleases the ladies. It is a droll fancy they have—But, gentlemen, I beg pardon—Is there any thing you want that I can do?

CLE. No, thank you, Fanny.

[Fanny goes out.]

SCENE II.

OVERFORD, CLEANTES.

OVER. [looking at his watch.] I am surprised my son is not come yet, it is twelve o'clock.——

CLE. Is he to sit to Diana?

OVER. Yes; and I fancy this first sitting will perhaps clear up more than one doubt.

CLE. How so?——

OVER. Is it possible that you, my dear Cleantes, who have lodged in this house these ten years, the intimate friend of Mrs. Denison and her charming daughter, have not observed some things with which I am so sensibly struck?

CLE. What! do you suspect Valentine of too tender an attachment to Diana?

OVER. What do you yourself think?

CLE. For some time, especially for these three months, he has been very melancholy and thoughtful!—and Diana is so engaging; she is mistress of so many good qualities, graces and accomplishments.—However, can your son resolve to become the rival of the Marquis of Linford, his intimate friend?

OVER. That passion, unworthy of her by whom it was inspired, was only a guilty error. — — —

CLE. It is true; the Marquis, a man of sensibility and generosity, but imperious and violent, presumed at first to conceive injurious hopes; he insulted the virtuous object whom he adored; he drew contempt and hatred upon himself, and he was refused admission into this house. Then, he was a long time persuaded that resentment, prejudice, and pride would have triumphed over love; however, you know that disgusted with dissipation and pleasures, plunged in the deepest melancholy, he shuns the world, and is never pleased but when he is with Valentine: this conduct seems to prove that he still loves Diana. Time and reflexion will cure a transient fancy, but gives a still deeper impression to a sincere passion; and shall Valentine the confidant of the Marquis, Valentine his only friend for these five years, Valentine in short, so generous, so noble, so delicate, betray him in secret, and become his rival? — No, I cannot believe it. — — —

OVER. It is highly pleasing to me, my dear Cleantes, to find you have such an opinion of my son, and I flatter myself that he will merit it. Notwithstanding the excessive distance which separates Valentine (the son of a retired merchant) from the Marquis of Linford, the conformity of their tempers and

education, has formed a friendship between them, the more solid, that it has not been the effect of chance, nor the trifling customs of society, but of esteem and sympathy. My son has the most sincere and affectionate attachment to the Marquis, there is no sacrifice he would decline making for him without hesitation; but in short, Diana never can be united to the Marquis. My son, even for the honour of his friend, should exhort him to get the better of a passion which reason condemns, and which sooner or later it will extinguish. With such an opinion, would not Valentine be excusable, if involuntarily, no doubt, he fell in love with Diana in secret? This affection is but a weakness in the Marquis, but my son may yield to it without wounding either decorum or the prejudices of the world.

CLE. You surprise me, I own. It is true Diana is descended from worthy parents, she was even born to inherit a more fortunate lot, she received a distinguished education, but misfortune plunged her in want, she has nothing; her talent for painting is become her only resource; and your son will have five thousand a year!——

OVER. Can he enjoy it better than by making an offer of it to virtuous indigence, to beauty ornamented by the charms of every accomplishment?——It is to accident I owe a great part of a fortune, the half of which

would have been more than sufficient to gratify all my desires : it is twenty years since I renounced all commercial pursuits ; I knew where to stop and set bounds to my ambition, which of all merits, is perhaps the most rare in men of my profession when favoured by fortune. If riches had opened my heart to insatiable desires, they would have deprived me of that pure happiness which I enjoy at present, peace of mind, the pleasing precious fruit of moderation, that inestimable blessing which always preserves us from the errors of disgraceful covetousness, and from the humiliating intoxication which may be occasioned by a splendid prosperity. I have five thousand pounds a year, what then have I to wish, for Valentine ? An alliance. A rich citizen by marrying a woman of quality, hazards his happiness, and does not add one jot to his personal consequence.—For which reason, the wife whom in my heart I would desire for my son, should be a young person whose birth is on a level with his own, distinguished by her virtues, her pleasing manners and accomplishments, and whom an unhappy situation made still more engaging.—What a satisfaction to be able at once to draw unknown merit from obscurity, deliver innocence from the attempts of vice, and reward virtue by uniting with an agreeable companion, whose sincere gratitude would be a certain pledge of a warm and lasting affection !

CLE. Such sentiments render you highly deserving that respect and universal esteem which is shewn you!—Ah Sir, Diana is certainly the wife you seek after, and undoubtedly she would interest you a thousand times more in her favour if you knew her as well as I do.

OVER. For a year I have studied her with attention, and am equally charmed with her disposition and understanding; that nobleness, that sensibility by which she is distinguished, her tender respect for her mother, her gentleness, her evenness of temper, in short all her virtues are known to me: one thing only obstructs my intentions.

CLE. What? the passion of the Marquis?—

OVER. No; for I am sure he will renounce it; but I wish to be certain, before I declare myself, that Diana would prefer my son to all the world; and I own that hitherto all my observations have been fruitless.—However, I sometimes thought I observed when Valentine looked at Diana, she seemed embarrassed; I have frequently seen her blush when speaking to him; but perhaps I have mistaken the amiable timidity of modesty, for the involuntary confusion occasion by love.

———— I am desirous of having signs less equivocal, more certain. ————— In short, I have taken it into my head to get her to paint my son's picture; if she loves him, can she

sustain that trial without betraying herself? Obligated to fix her eyes upon him for a whole hour, will they not in some moment discover the feelings of her soul?

CLE. I own your idea seems admirable, and if your purposes were not so good, I should think this scheme as treacherous as it is ingenious. But tell me, you think that Valentine is in love with Diana, and do you imagine that he is without hope?—

OVER. Valentine, absolutely free from every kind of presumption, is timid and of great sensibility, so that if the most tender return should be made to him short of a positive avowal, I believe he would not flatter himself. However, it may be possible that some particular circumstances have made known to him the sentiments of Diana, and that you may be able to discover better than I: he has confidence in you; he likewise knows that by your being acquainted with Diana from her birth, you have the affection of a father for her; and undoubtedly, if he ventures to open his heart, it will be easy for you to penetrate all its secrets.

CLE. Well, I promise you I will question him this very day if I can find an opportunity.—Is not that his voice I hear?

OVER. Yes, it is he; since Diana is not yet returned, take advantage of the present moment and speak to him; I will go and wait for you in your apartment, you will come and find me there.

CLE. Very well, but go by the little closet, that you may not meet Valentine.—

OVER. Adieu, I leave you—for he is coming.—[He goes out.]

CLE. [alone.] O, he is chatting with Fanny; that may last a great while, for Fanny is not a girl to let slip an opportunity of talking.—Ha, here he comes.

SCENE III.

CLEANTES, VALENTINE.

VAL. My father is not here?

CLE. He is gone upon business, but he will return to be present at the first sitting of your picture.

VAL. Sir, have you seen Mrs. Dennison to-day?

CLE. Yes, for a moment in the morning.—

VAL. What a valuable woman is Mrs. Dennison!—so good, such an affectionate mother!

CLE. And the more respectable as her indigence is only the effect of her probity. She was not bound to pay the debts her husband left at his death; but she would discharge them all.—Accustomed to live in easy circum-

stances, she reconciled herself to poverty, and supports it with a noble spirit.—I see, my dear Valentine, how compassionate you are, this detail moves and affects you.——

VAL. I do not desire to restrain my feelings. Why should one wish to conceal that tender regard which unfortunate virtue ought to inspire? Yes, I own it, I am proud of declaring that I have the sincerest attachment and respect for Mrs. Dennison—there is nothing I would not do to prove it.——

CLE. And Diana?——You say nothing of her.——Are you only sensible to the virtues of the mother?——Have those of the daughter made no impression upon you? How you blush!—That question seems very perplexing.

VAL. The intention which is suspected frequently embarrasses more than the truth.—I guess your thoughts——and I am grieved that you should suspect I can be capable of betraying friendship.

CLE. What! you mean to speak of the Marquis? But is not his passion an insult to Diana?——

VAL. And if love should at last get the better of prejudice?

CLE. How! can he conceive the design of marrying Diana?—Resolve to set the opinion of the public and the resentment of his family at defiance?——

VAL. Diana herself will obtain his pardon;

who can know her, and not excuse the faults that she shall have occasioned !

CLE. But if Diana, insensible to ambition, prefers perhaps, another object, more amiable in her eyes, to the Marquis ?——

VAL. [quickly]. What do you say ?—— How is this !—— Have you been informed ?— Has she told you ?——

CLE. No indeed, I know nothing, I am totally ignorant of the inclinations of her heart.——

VAL. [aside.] Alas ! what was my mistake, and foolish presumption !—— To believe for one instant ! ah, wretch that I am !——

CLE. You think then that the Marquis, with sentiments worthy of Diana, may at last gain her affections ?——

VAL. And does he not deserve to be loved ! Virtue, knowledge, accomplishments, birth, and fortune, are all united in him.—— His soul is as noble, as generous even as Diana's ; he has the delicate cultivated mind of Diana, and is master of almost all her talents.—— In short, Diana and he seem to be formed for each other.—— In spite of caprice, and the injustice of chance and fortune which separates them, such a conformity in advantages so uncommon and so solid, makes a chimerical inequality disappear, and ought sooner or later to bring them together, and unite them for life.

SCENE IV.

CLEANTES, VALENTINE,
FANNY.

FAN. [bringing a Painter's Easel.] Gentlemen, with your leave——I must put all these implements in order.

CLE. Yes, Fanny, prepare every thing for the sitting. Adieu, Valentine, I am going to my own apartment a moment. [Aside.] I must go and give an account of this conversation to Overford.——

[He goes out.]

SCENE V.

VALENTINE, FANNY.

VAL. [aside.] How shall I be able to acquit myself of this cruel commission!—He wishes to see her.—She will readily consent; she loves him in secret, I am certain.—Ah Heaven!—

FAN. [putting in order the Easel, the cloth, and the colours.] Sir, if it is not being too curious---is it your picture that is going to be painted?

VAL. Yes, my dear Fanny.—

FAN. O, I engage that Miss Diana will hit your likeness exactly.—

VAL. She paints so well!----Has she never painted her own picture?

FAN. By Gemini!-----you don't know then?—

VAL. What?

FAN. [drawing near, and with an air of mystery.] Yes surely, she has painted herself.—A picture was wanted for a church (it is only a year since she began to work at pictures) and as she could not find a saint to her mind, she painted her own likeness, which she im-

mediately put upon a little cloth; but behold, a gentleman who had a glance of it in her closet, wanted to have it; and the girl that was here before me, let him have it for I don't know how much money---Miss Diana was excessively angry, the girl was dismissed; and on that occasion I got her place, because Mrs. Dennison knew me, for I am the cousin of Miss Diana's foster-sister---That is the history---O, I have seen many more, though I have been here but eight months! Now that Miss Diana has business, things go on better, but before she was known, O, what she suffered.---During the last illness of her dear mother, for instance, good God! how she toiled day and night; to be able to pay the physician and surgeon, she painted all day; when night came, she copied music, or made works in embroidery, which I sold the next morning.---And with all this, still so mild, so quiet as if nothing had been the matter.---Miss, said I to her, you will kill yourself---No, no, said she, it is for my mother, that will not fatigue me!---

VAL. What a story!----Such a detail!----

FAN. I think I hear somebody knock---
'Tis she certainly-----[She cries] coming
-----[She runs out.]

VAL. [alone.] O Diana! thou incomparable girl! Happy, a thousand times happy the man who can offer a rank and fortune worthy of you.----- My heart is oppressed

———my tears flow in spite of me ——
However, I am certain, the happiness of
Diana can console me for every thing—Some-
body comes----O God, it is she!———

S C E N E VI.

VALENTINE, Mrs. DENNISON,
D I A N A,

Mrs. DEN. I beg you will excuse us, Sir,
for making you wait----But your father is not
here; he is certainly with Cleantes, I will go
and send for him.----

VAL. First of all, Madam, deign to afford
me a moment's conversation.----

DIA. Shall I withdraw?----

VAL. No, Miss, this explanation must be
made in your presence.——

DIA. [aside.] He seems confused---What
is he going to say?----

Mrs. DEN. Well, Sir?

VAL. [aside.] I tremble----[Aloud.]----I
am confused I own----I dread your distrust----
your anger.----

Mrs. DEN. You surprise me——what is it you mean?

DIA. [aside.] I am exceedingly disturbed!——

VAL. May I not flatter myself, Madam, that my character is known to you, and that you neither doubt my probity, nor my sincerity?

DIA. [aside.] How shall I dissemble the violent emotions of my heart!——

Mrs. DEN. I am persuaded you will always justify the opinion I have conceived of your prudence and your sentiments——
Therefore, Sir, I beg you will explain yourself.

VAL. You know, Madam, the sincerity of that friendship which unites me to the Marquis of Linford. The confidant (in spite of me) of his errors, I have truly felt for the injury he offered to you, and I could not, without the deepest sorrow, see my friend debase himself, by insulting and forgetting what was due to virtue. For a long time, that he has been banished from your presence, contempt has punished, but not cured him: what assistance could he hope from reason, against a passion which it could only purify, but not destroy!——What do I say, it could only increase its violence.——

DIA. [aside.] O Heavens, what do I hear!——Ah! how I have been mistaken!——

VAL. In short, madam, I now dare to answer for the purity of his intentions.—
[Aside,] I cannot go on.

Mrs. DEN. Such a change indeed could not but surprise us!——

VAL. [aside, looking at Diana.] Diana!—she blushes! she seems softened, ah, I foresaw it!——

Mrs. DEN. [to Valentine.] What are his purposes; his hopes?

VAL. He conjures you to hear him.—
He has written to you, madam, but you have sent back all his letters unopened—and seeing his despair, I consented to speak to you.—
[Aside.] What shameful weakness!—my tears will betray me!

Mrs. DEN. Say, daughter—it is you that must answer.

DIA. [aside.] I shall not hesitate.—[to Valentine.] Sir, you may tell this friend who is so dear to you—that man who has so cruelly insulted me; that I can neither pardon him nor see him.—These are my true sentiments, and my irrevocable resolution.—

VAL. [aside.] Such violence, such heat! Ah, it is the language of resentment, not of indifference!

DIA. And, Sir, I beg you will deign to have so much consideration for me, as never to mention his name in my presence.

VAL. I see, Miss, that you doubt of his sincerity, but——

DIA. It is enough : allow me, Sir, to put an end to this conversation ; you desired an answer, I have given one ; be so good, Sir, as to repeat it exactly to your friend.

VAL. You command it—I must obey.—
[Aside, in going out.] Alas ! I don't know what to think ; nor how to unravel what passes in my own mind !————

[He goes out.]

SCENE VII.

Mrs. DENNISON, DIANA.

Mrs. DEN. So much warmth surprises me, Diana ! ——— why that hasty refusal ? If it is true that his intentions are pure, why not at least give him a hearing ?

DIA. No, mama, it is some new snare, an unworthy artifice you may depend upon it. ——— It would seem as if that man was born only to importune and torment me ! ——— He becomes hateful to me, — I own I cannot keep my temper when I hear his name mentioned. ——— When will he have done with persecuting me ? I cannot endure him ? How I hate him !

Mrs. DEN. You, know what hatred is, Diana!—Is that frightful passion suited to your mind?—At the time the Marquis employed every resource of his imagination to seduce you, your only revenge was disdain; you shewed nothing but a cold undisturbed contempt. But now, when he assures you of his repentance, when he would have you understand that he consents to place you on a level with himself; why this agitation, why these violent transports?

DIA. Place me on a level with himself!
—no, no, never.

Mrs. DEN. No, Diana! it is his purpose, I have no doubt of it; after all, he is twenty-eight, he is his own master, he loves you passionately, and who shall prevent him from marrying you? —Will his honour be wounded by uniting himself to so much virtue? —Yes, I have happy forebodings that heaven has destined you to enjoy that splendid fortune. But what is the matter, Diana, you are in tears? I don't understand you! —

DIA. No, happiness was not made for me!
—I renounce it.

Mrs. DEN. Alas, my child, you have in fact known nothing hitherto but misfortunes, and yet this is the first time that you have distressed me by complaining of your destiny.

DIA. Ah, mama!—may I pass my life with you——may I always remain in that

obscurity which suits me——may my mother afford me her indulgence——may she continue her affection for me——and I can support every thing!

Mrs. DEN. What a condition you are in, my girl!——What mean these bitter tears, that terrible affliction which oppresses you? Shall I tell you, Diana, I suspect you do not know your own sentiments with regard to the Marquis? You dare not depend upon his sincerity, and that doubt occasions fears and a disquiet which would not be so keen if you were insensible.

DIA. I love him! O heaven! ——

Mrs. DEN. Every thing proves it. From the time he left off coming here, a secret melancholy consumes you, and seems every day to increase.——In short, you may now hope, but till this moment, Diana, how could you give yourself up to so dangerous a passion? Ought you to have left your mother, your friend, in ignorance of its fatal progress? ——Was it right to neglect asking her advice? ——

DIA. Your advice!——Undoubtedly I have the highest value for it, without it I can only go astray. ——

Mrs. DEN. Was it timidity only which prevented you from having recourse to it?

DIA. What other motive can set bounds to the confidence I owe you?

Mrs. DEN. So then, Diana, you own I

am not mistaken in my conjectures, and that the Marquis is not indifferent to you?

DIA. He!—No, no, mama, you are mistaken.—[Aside.] How is it possible she can be deceived?

Mrs. DEN. That denial is only whim—but let us talk no more about it; at present you are not yourself; let us have done with this conversation, we will resume it in the evening. It is late, let us go to dinner, for since Valentine is gone out, he can't sit till the afternoon. Come, my girl.

DIA. [aside in going out.] One moment longer and I had confessed all.

[They go out.]

A C T II.

SCENE FIRST.

DIANA, FANNY.

DIANA.

WHERE are my colours?

FAN. There they are, Miss, and the cloth too.

DIA. This cloth is too coarse, and these colours are good for nothing; go to my closet and look for some others.

FAN. It was with these, however, you painted the Viscountess.—

DIA. Do what I desire you.

FAN. O I suppose you want to do something very fine.——By my faith Mr. Valentine is well worth the trouble, he has such an interesting countenance!—and that does honour to a picture.

DIA. Go then, Fanny.

FAN. I run, Miss. [She goes out.]

DIA. [alone.] My mother,!——what a mistake is hers!——And I had not the courage to undeceive her!—If I durst have declared my weakness to her sooner, she would have led me right; she would have instructed me how to triumph over it.——What! to love, and not know if I am loved.—What do I say? alas, I am certain that I am not! He would sacrifice every thing to his friend!——Ah, how my heart is torn! how I am humbled, unfortunate, and dissatisfied with myself!——

FAN. [coming back.] Miss, here is all that I could find.

DIA. Very well—and—and the pencils?

FAN. There they are.

DIA. They are abominable!—Go and bring those that are in the drawer of my little table.

FAN. By my troth, Miss, I never saw you so hard to be pleased. [She goes out.]

DIA. [arranging her colours upon a pallet.] I am going to paint his picture!——How can I?——I who never dared to fix my eyes on that sweet amiable countenance, of

256 THE PORTRAIT,

which every feature however is engraven on my heart!

FAN. [returning.] There are the pencils, Miss—— your mother and all the company are coming.——

DIA. [aside.] Ah, let me conceal my confusion, if possible!——

S C E N E II.

Mrs. DENNISON, OVERFORD, CLEANTES, DIANA, VALENTINE.

OVER. So, at last we are all assembled! ——[To Diana.] Miss, I beg your pardon for not having come sooner, though I was with Cleantes, but I waited for my son, and he is but this moment returned. Now we wait your orders.

Mrs. DEN. Is every thing ready, Diana?

DIA. Yes, mama.

CLE. Come, come, Miss Diana, begin.

VAL. [aside.] How melancholy she looks!

OVER. But first, Miss, you will be so good as to place my son——there——in that manner opposite to you; is not that right?

DIA. Yes, Sir.

OVER. Sit down, Valentine.

VAL. But am I not too far off?

CLE. [to Diana.] Should he draw nearer?

DIA. As he pleases.——[Valentine approaches with timidity.]

DIA. The light is better at a distance:
[Valentine approaches a little nearer.]

VAL. [aside.] How my soul is agitated!
She is going to be obliged to fix her eyes
upon me, and I can contemplate her without
restraint!

Mrs. DEN. Come, daughter, begin.—
[Diana takes her place; Valentine sits down,
Mrs. Dennison sits by her daughter, takes
something out of her work-bag, and works.
Overford and Cleantes remain standing, and
go sometimes behind Diana, and sometimes
behind Valentine. After a short silence.]

CLE. [low to Overford.] Look at Diana—
see how her hand shakes!

OVER. [low to Cleantes.] She has not
yet ventured to look up at Valentine!

CLE. [aloud.] Miss, you are a great while
mixing your colours!

DIA. [disturbed.] That is true—it is
because——it is so cold a day——my fin-
gers are benumbed.——

CLE. Your hand does not seem to be very
steady indeed!

DIA. I am always so.——[Aside.] I
don't know what I am saying!——

CLE. What! your hand tremble naturally! I never observed it before.

Mrs. DEN. [still working.] What stories you tell there! Come, my girl, have done.—

DIA. [aside.] I cannot get the better of my confusion!—ah, what have I undertaken! —[She begins to paint.] [A long silence.]

OVER. But, Valentine, you must lay aside that languishing air, your picture will have such a melancholy look.——Miss, I pray you order him to smile.——

DIA. I would not constrain him, Sir.— Besides I think it very natural that he should not be gay; sitting to one's picture is so tiresome!

VAL. Tiresome! what an expression! when you are the object beheld, and whose attention is engaged.

CLE. Very well, that is gallant!—— Certainly, Miss is a very agreeable object to look at, and it must be very pleasing to fix her attention by any means; but however it must be owned that to remain a whole hour motionless, is not very entertaining——and a proof of it is, my dear Valentine, that since you have sat there, you have twenty times changed countenance.

OVER. [looking at the picture.] Cleantes, come and look; truly I find already a great likeness in the sketch.——

CLE. Yes indeed——very great.

OVER. I am very much pleased with it!

—I set a great value upon that Portrait, as I intend it for my future daughter-in-law.—
And I hope to be able to present it to her in less than six months.——

VAL. Six months, Sir!

OVER. I know very well you are not impatient to be married!——He is so indifferent, so insensible!——But however I must do him the justice to say I saw him in love five or six years ago.

VAL. Who, I, Sir!

OVER. Yes, yes, and very deeply smitten you were; it was a first passion, and that is the only true passion.

VAL. A passion!

Mrs. DEN. What is the matter with you, Diana?

DIA. Mama—I have dropt my pencil.—
O here it is.

VAL. A passion!——What a name you give, Sir, to a slight emotion of preference which did not last an instant.——

Yes, I am very well persuaded that people love but once in their lives.—But that is when the choice of the heart is confirmed by reason.

OVER. Try to speak, if you please, without so many gestures; you sit so badly that for some time Miss has done nothing but de-face.

CLE. [looking at the picture with attention.] The likeness comes out wonderfully!——
But, pray, Miss, don't you think the eyes are too large?

OVER. Upon the whole it seems to me that you flatter my son very much ; don't you think so ?

DIA. I paint him just as I see him, Sir.

Mrs. DEN. [looking at the picture.] His look is very well expressed ! —— For a first sitting, truly I think the Portrait is surprising. —— But what does Fanny want ?

SCENE III.

Mrs. DENNISON, OVERFORD, DIANA, VALENTINE, CLEANTES, FANNY.

FAN. Madam ! ——

Mrs. DEN. What is the matter ?

FAN. Here is the Marquis of Linford, Madam, who would force his way into the house in spite of me.

DIA. [rising.] How ! —— [Every body rises.]

FAN. Here he comes.

[Fanny goes out, after having placed the Easel at the bottom of the Stage.]

SCENE IV.

Mrs. DENNISON, OVERFORD, DIANA,
CLEANTES, VALENTINE, The
MARQUIS.

VAL. [aside] O Heaven !

MAR. [aside.] I scarcely dare to approach !——

[Diana wants to go out, the Marquis lays hold of her robe.]

MAR. Ah, Miss, pray stop—deign to hear me but one instant!——

DIA. What do you mean by this violence ?

MAR. Violence!——Ah, are you not certain of my submission ? I only come here to make you the arbiter of my fate ; in short to receive such laws as you will be pleased to prescribe.——

DIA. Well then, my Lord——do not detain me——do not follow me, and forget me.——[She goes out.]

MAR. Such contempt!——[To Mrs. Dennison.] And you, Madam, will you likewise refuse to hear me ?

Mrs. DEN. Allow me, my Lord, to go and join my daughter. [She goes out.]

SCENE V.

The MARQUIS, OVERFORD, VALENTINE, CLEANTES.

MAR. Ah Valentine! what shall I do?

VAL. You have been excessively imprudent in coming here.——

MAR. My dear Cleantes.—Mr. Overford, advise me.——

CLE. I advise you, my Lord, to renounce Diana.

MAR. Renounce her!—I cannot.——

OVER. But what are your intentions?

MAR. To do every thing for her.—Speak to her I conjure you.——

OVER. The attachment I owe to your family as well as to yourself, my Lord, must debar me from taking any step contrary to your honour and your true interest.

MAR. I have no hope then but in you, Cleantes!

OVER. Allow me to tell you, my Lord, that Diana seems too strongly prejudiced against you for me to presume to undertake such a commission.

MAR. To whom then shall I apply?

OVER. Consult only your reason; that alone

ought to guide us, and can console us for the sacrifices it requires. Come, Cleantes. [He goes out, Cleantes follows him.]

S C E N E VI.

The MARQUIS, VALENTINE.

MAR. Well Valentine, I am sufficiently humbled, debased !

VAL. I plainly told you that Diana preserved the keenest resentment against you.——

MAR. But when I offer to atone for my faults and my injustice ; when I with submission implore the slight favour of a moment's conversation, to treat me with such contempt !

——Did you observe, Valentine, what a disdainful look she cast on me ! She commands me to fly from her, to forget her.—Yes, I ought ; vanity, reason, every thing recommends it.---But I cannot live without her.---The long absence I enjoined myself, has only served to let me know the invincible power of that fatal passion by which I am governed.---Dear Valentine, I see your tears flow——you lament the shameful disgrace of your unfortunate friend.——You may be assured this generous compassion alleviates my distress.

VAL. Ah, how I pity you.---Alas, I con-

ceive the torments of your distracted heart.--- Well, let us fly, let us leave Paris.---I am ready to follow you.---I remember you intended to go to Italy ; let us set out---the dissipation of a long journey will perhaps restore you to yourself,----Dispose of me as you please ; you are unfortunate----I will give up all for you.-----

MAR. Alas ! I know your heart.---But can I abuse your indulgent, affectionate friendship, to such excess ? --- Why, my dear Valentine, shall you, who are equally prudent and happy, renounce the pleasures which Paris offers you, to associate yourself to the sorrows of a madman whom nothing can cure ? ---However I will depart, yes, I promise you ; but you must remain, I demand it, I insist upon it.

VAL. No, no, I will follow you.---I ardently desire it, and I am determined.---I conjure you only to hasten our departure.

MAR. Do you think that this resolution can surprise Diana ? ---Do you think that in the bottom of her soul she will not be nettled at it ?

VAL. Diana has greatness of mind ; but she has no pride.-----

MAR. If I was sure she had only resentment against me !---if I could flatter myself with the hope of pleasing her, and of being loved by her !---At least she is incapable of deceit.---It is all over, I yeild to my unhappy fate.---I wish to let her know my heart.-----

VAL. What do you mean?

MAR. You see my weakness, I blush for it, but I cannot overcome it.—Hitherto I have had nothing but unsettled projects: this very morning I only wished to see Diana that I might obtain my pardon, and give her hope, that I may one day sacrifice to her, every prejudice that obstructs my happiness.—But now I am determined.—Let her give me her esteem; let her say that she can love me, and I will marry her without farther delay.——

VAL. Do you think doing it?

MAR. I am resolved. It would be fruitless to endeavour to oppose it. You have already said every thing that is solid which reason and friendship could suggest; from this time, every effort to dissuade me, will be in vain.

VAL. And how will you acquaint Diana with this sudden resolution? She will neither see you nor receive your letters.——

MAR. You will speak to her, my dear Valentine.——

VAL. Who, I?——

MAR. Yes, that is the only service you can do me. You will tell her that I love her more than ever; that her high spirit and noble resentment has only served to redouble such a tender passion; and in short, if her heart is not averse to me, I beg upon my knees that she will grant me her hand.—But, what is the matter with you, Valentine? you seem thoughtful, you do not listen to me.

VOL. IV.

Z

VAL. No, no, you must not hope that I can accept such a commission.—Well, speak, speak yourself; Diana and her mother, delighted with such a formal proposal, will not hesitate an instant.—[He moves to go out.]

MAR. [stopping him.] Stop—where are you going?

VAL. I do not know.——

MAR. What, Valentine, will you forsake me?

VAL. I cannot, and I ought not to serve you in an affair which will embroil you irrecoverably with all your friends and relations.—

MAR. You will remain to me.—Besides, am not I my own master?—If Heaven had preserved my father and mother, I would in them have respected those prejudices which I have not; but I am free; I love, I have passionately loved for these three years the most amiable, the most virtuous of her sex; nothing can tear her from my heart; I give myself up to that pleasing desire; what mind so savage as to condemn me, or at least to refuse its indulgence?

VAL. But in forming such a disproportioned alliance, you set a most dangerous example.

MAR. Unequal alliances were never so common; if Diana by her birth was of a still lower rank of life, and had ten thousand a year, though without any of those charms by which she is distinguished, is there a nobleman in the kingdom who would refuse to marry her?—

Well then, I will do, from my enthusiastic regard for virtue and accomplishments, what the love of money only makes so many other people do.—In short, my dear Valentine, let us talk no more of it, I do not ask for your advice, but a service upon which the whole happiness of my life depends.

VAL. [aside] What a severe trial!

MAR. Promise me then to see Diana, and to speak to her this very day.——

VAL. No—I cannot find resolution to do it.

MAR. But—prejudices apart, do you blame my choice?

VAL. I blame it!—Diana is deserving of the sacrifice you propose to make!——

MAR. [with emotion.] Do you imagine I am hated—and that her heart is prejudiced in favour of another?

VAL. If I had thought so, I would have told you of it. No, I am persuaded she will receive your offers with equal sensibility and gratitude.

MAR. Well then, my friend, when you see my resolution is not to be shaken, what can prevent you from serving me?——

VAL. Perhaps there is nobody but could speak better than I.

MAR. [with astonishment.] How is this!—Valentine—you are disturbed—Good Heaven, what is this I perceive!—I can get the better of my passion.—I can even sacrifice myself to friendship!—but if I were abused, betrayed!

VAL. Betrayed !——That suspicion enter your heart, and your tongue dare to express it !

MAR. Alas ! I beg your pardon—Distrust, that base emotion of mean souls, is not in my disposition, you know it.—But my head is distracted——I am no longer myself—I pray you excuse the faulty imprudence of a transitory fit of passion—I know you, and I submit myself to your will.

VAL. The cruel expression which escaped you, demands an explanation, I therefore shall give it. I never observed that Diana gave me the least preference ; I am very certain she cannot imagine she has made the least impression on my heart ; I ardently desire both your happiness and hers ; this I can declare to you by the most solemn oaths.——

MAR. That is enough—this explanation even, was quite useless ; my dear Valentine, have you need of any with me ?---One word, a single word from you, is always sufficient to dispel my fears, and restore to me all the confidence I owe to that delicacy and scrupulous probity which have for ever attached me to you ?---In short, my dear friend, you must grant me pardon, and to prove to me that I have not lost any of my rights with you, promise me to speak to Diana.

VAL. But can I when you have suspected me?——

MAR. Ah, if you were in secret my rival, I would trust you.——

VAL. You would not be mistaken---but apply once more to Cleantes, perhaps he will consent.-----

MAR. No, he has refused me ; I have no hope but in you alone ; besides, after what has just now passed between us, it is a great pleasure to me to give you this proof of my confidence.

VAL. [aside.] O Diana !-----

MAR. Say---Answer me, my friend.

VAL. We forget where we are---Let us go ; come home with me---give me time to reflect.

MAR. Come, my dear Valentine---I will not leave you till I have obtained that affecting proof of your friendship.

VAL. [aside in going out.] Alas ! to what extremity am I reduced !---[They go out.]

End of the Second Act.

A C T III.

S C E N E F I R S T.

D I A N A, [alone.]

NOW, I am at last alone!—Ah, in what dreadful restraint have I passed this day!—always within an instant of betraying myself!—Valentine!—is it possible my excessive agitation can have escaped his notice!—No, no, he knows nothing of what I have suffered——indifference makes no observations. [She sits down opposite to Valentine's picture.] For some time I have felt an oppression at my heart, a dejection, which almost deprives me of my reason.—[She looks at the picture.] How badly I have copied his features!—These are not his eyes, those affecting eyes which so well express all the virtues of his soul.—[She takes up her pencils, and paints.] What affection for his father, for his friend!—

Can he love none but those two objects ?----
[She still continues to paint.] However, this
day, and in this very place, I thought I twice
observed him melt into tenderness while look-
ing at me!—Perhaps he has discovered my
secret ; perhaps he pities me !---What, shall
I obtain nothing from him but humiliating
compassion !----Ah, may he rather for ever
remain ignorant of an unhappy passion which
I shall abjure, which I will overcome, if it
must expose me to the insupportable torment
of blushing in his presence !----Ah ! if he
thinks he is beloved I shall undeceive him----
yes, I shall have the courage !----Somebody
comes—let me dry up my tears—Good God,
it is he !————

SCENE II.

DIANA, VALENTINE.

DIA. [rising with consternation.] How shall I conceal from him, that I was thinking of him, and in tears?

VAL. [aside.] There she is—O heaven, assist me to keep my promise——[He stops.]

DIA. I must send away this picture!—Fanny—Fanny——

VAL. [aside.] She seems agitated, disturbed—[He comes forward.] Miss, I beg your pardon,——

DIA. [aside, turning away her Face.] Fanny—She don't come, I must go.—My legs tremble under me—I am quite spent!—[She sinks into her chair.]

VAL. O God!—What is the matter with you!—how pale!——

DIA. Nothing——I thought—I imagined when you entered, I heard the voice of the Marquis of Linford, and——

VAL. And can that voice cause such violent emotion?——[He falls into a reverie.]

FANNY. [coming upon them unexpectedly.] Here I am, Miss, did you not call me?

DIA. [rising.] Yes,—carry away the easel.

FANNY, [looking at the picture.] Ha, ha, you have been working at it again.

DIA. Go away.

FAN. So, the eyes are finished—By my faith, now it is as like him as two peas.

DIA. [with impatience.] Go away, Fanny.——

FAN. [aside, carrying the easel.] I don't know what plant she has trode upon to-day : I never saw her so out of humour.

[She goes out.]

DIA. [Aside.] He is thinking—let me see if I can discover the subject of his attention, and whether or not I have diverted his suspicions—[Aloud.] The fright I was in seems to have surpris'd you, Sir, but when you reflect on the behaviour of the Marquis of Linford,

VAL. [with an affected coldness.] Who, I, Miss!— I am not surpris'd.——

DIA. You know that I ought to hate him.

VAL. Hate him!—I have no right which can entitle me to pretend to your confidence.——But at the same time, Miss, I presume that I have never done any thing, which should induce you to have a desire of deceiving me.——

DIA. How, Sir!——

VAL. Hatred in a heart such as yours cannot produce such turbulent agitations—I well know these keen and violent emotions, I have felt them but too often!——but I never yet could hate.——

DIA. [aside.] O heavens! what do I hear! —he has loved—without doubt he still loves— what then?

VAL. In short, Miss, I congratulate myself on having discovered your secret—I was charged with a commission which embarrassed me. I approached you with dread---but now--I am encouraged.——

DIA. What are you going to say?

VAL. [in a low and weak voice.] That the Marquis of Linford adores you, and makes you an offer of his hand.——

DIA. [aside.] He turns pale!—he blushes! —Ah, what can I think?——

VAL. He only desires that a secret tie may unite you—he esteems it his greatest glory to love you—at last I have executed my commission——[Aside.] I may now go and hide my weakness and my despair.—[He moves some steps.]

DIA. And you do not wait my answer?

VAL. Ah, I can guess it.——

DIA. [aside.] His eyes are filled with tears! —No, I am not mistaken!——

VAL. [aside.] What a pure and lively joy seemed to animate every feature within this instant!---Let me fly from a sight which kills me!

DIA. Stop, Sir.

VAL. Why would you detain me?

DIA. My situation is perplexing---I am still distressed with doubt and uncertainty.——

VAL. I well know how pleasing it is to hear a declaration repeated which delights us.--- Know then, Madam, that you are beloved as passionately as you deserve.-----

DIA. [aside.] His resentment is visible, it is no illusion.---[Aloud.] How should I decide? What do you advise?

VAL. [impetuously.] I advise you!--- Ah! that is too much!---[in a calmer tone.] Have you not already determined?---Why then that artifice so unworthy of you?---Why endeavour to conceal an inclination equally reasonable and lawful?

DIA. No, I have no artifice---I wish to make you acquainted with my sentiments---but a proper reserve prevents me from explaining myself.-----

VAL. Do not constrain yourself---the avowal would be superfluous.-----

DIA. I must think, however,---that you would have some pleasure in hearing it.-----

VAL. [excessively constrained.] I am---to be sure---sensible---as much as is possible for me to be, of the happiness of the Marquis---but, Miss, you leave me no sort of doubt upon that head.---I am going to join him, and shall send him to you.-----

DIA. Send him to me!---No, no.-----

VAL. He is with Cleantes waiting my return.

DIA. [after a moment's reflection.] Well then, let him come---I will speak to him.-----

VAL. I foresaw it—Adieu, Miss—[Aside.]
I had almost discovered myself!—Repose,
reason and happiness, are for ever fled from
me ! [He goes out hastily.]

S C E N E III.

DIANA, [alone.]

I have at last seen into his soul !---Valentine !—he loved me, and sacrificed himself to friendship. He shall find in my heart the reward of so noble an effort, of such excessive generosity !—Valentine ! how dear he is to me !—he loves me !—it is not a dream, an illusion !—However, he is gone away in despair—but could I undeceive him, when my mother is still ignorant of my sentiments !—I am sure she will approve of them—let me run to find her—[She moves some steps to go out.] Here she comes !—but Overford is with her ; —I cannot venture to explain myself in his presence.

SCENE IV.

OVERFORD, Mrs. DENNISON, DIANA.

OVER. [to Mrs. Dennison.] I see Diana, she will acquaint you with what my son could not tell us.——

Mrs. DEN. Diana, did not Valentine leave you just now?

DIA. Yes, Mama.

Mrs. DEN. We just now met him, he seemed confounded and in violent agitation; we wanted to ask him the reason, but he ran off without giving an answer.

DIA. Mama—the Marquis of Linford had requested him to speak to me.——

OVER. [aside, looking at Diana] What an air of satisfaction!—[Aloud.] Well, Miss, the Marquis has made you an offer of his hand?—What answer have you given?

DIA. I have consented to see him—he will certainly come.——

OVER. [aside.] Ah, all my projects are overturned.

DIA. I shall answer him in your presence, Mama.—I was just going in search of you to lay open my whole heart to you.——

Mrs. DEN. Whatever your sentiments are, my dear, I leave you at full liberty to dispose

of yourself, and I know you sufficiently, to be certain that ambition alone can never have power to determine your choice.

DIA. [kissing her mother's hand.] Ah, dear mother! —

OVER. [aside.] And yet it is to ambition only, she sacrifices Valentine! — How excessively have I been mistaken in her character!

Mrs. DEN. Somebody comes—it is the Marquis.

DIA. Mama, will you give me leave to speak to him without disguise?

Mrs. DEN. It is my wish, and you certainly ought.

DIA. I shall obey. —

OVER. [aside.] I must see what will be the end of this.

SCENE V.

THE MARQUIS. OVERFORD, CLEAN-
TES, Mrs. DENNISON, DIANA.

MAR. [to Cleantes.] Notwithstanding the hopes that have been given me, yet I cannot approach her without trembling! —

DIA. [aside.] I don't see Valentine!

OVER. [to Diana.] Here is the Marquis, Miss.—Perhaps you desire to speak with him only in presence of your mother?

DIA. Pray, Sir, do not go—you can neither incommode nor constrain me. —

MAR. I am at last permitted then, Miss, to —

DIA. Allow me, my Lord, to ask you first what you have been told? —

MAR. That you were informed of my sentiments, and had consented to see me.

DIA. My Lord, I thought I owed that deference to the uprightness of your intentions. —

CLE. [aside, looking at Diana.] Her manner seems very cold and constrained!

DIA. I was desirous to prove to you my gratitude and esteem, the only sentiments you can expect from me. —

MAR. That is sufficient, if you allow me to

hope, that in time it may be possible for me to obtain the most agreeable——

DIA. Not to feel them, and to promise them, would be to deceive you.—No, my Lord, when you deign to forget the excessive distance which separates us, I should be unworthy the sacrifice you are willing to make, if I accepted it without being able to offer you an affection equal to your own.—What love gives, love alone can pay—and I should blush to receive such proofs of affection, if you did not find the full value of them in my heart.—

MAR. O Heaven, what cruel language!

Mrs. DEN. [aside.] My surprise is excessive!

OVER. [aside.] Ah, how great my injustice!

CLE. Excessive delicacy, Diana, perhaps leads you astray.——

DIA. Ambition, no doubt, would give a different explanation; but I know no language but that of truth and honour.

MAR. I am confounded!—So, Miss—you refuse my offers?——

DIA. They do me honour; they inspire me with the most lively gratitude, but I cannot, nor ought to accept them. The time will come, my Lord, you may depend upon it, when you will be pleased with this frank declaration. Every disproportioned union terminates in unhappiness; when love becomes blunted, the object for whom every thing was

sacrificed, is then suspected of ambition ; a dreadful doubt, which alone may poison the purest felicity.—Besides, have you not some relations whom such a folly would exceedingly offend ? and shall I consent to bring trouble and discord into a happy and respectable family, I expose myself to the malicious interpretations of the world, to that secret mean envy which an unexpected fortune always occasions. Calumny would accuse me of intrigue and artifice, and in short, of having deceived you.—And how intolerable is the reproach of having injured the object whom we love !—I could not support such an accumulation of distress, calumny and humiliation.—Nothing discourages, nothing deters ambition and selfishness ; but the shadow of an injurious suspicion, wounds and distracts the noble generous heart ; no, that splendid unhappy lot was not made for me ; and even, if I could have shared those sentiments with which you honour me, I have too much delicacy, and perhaps pride, for it to be possible that you could ever insure the happiness of my life.

OVER. [aside.] O too happy Valentine !—

Mrs. DEN. [low to Diana.] Ah, Diana, should I have been so late in discovering your secret ?

DIA. Alas, I never had any desire to conceal it from you !

MAR. [coming to himself, after a deep re-

verie.] Astonishment, admiration—grief—doubt—and a thousand confused and different emotions agitate me by turns.—I know not where to fix my thoughts!—What sentiment ought to prevail in my mind?—

OVER. Esteem and gratitude, which you cannot refuse to such nobleness and candour.

MAR. [with a wild look.] Where is Valentine?—Why did not he follow me?—

CLE. He remains in my house.—

OVER. Go and find him, my dear Cleantes, [Low to Cleantes.] But don't give him the least hint of the business.

CLE. [low to Overford.] I understand you—don't be afraid. [He goes out.]

MAR. [in a transport of rage] So, I am hated—my offers are despised—friendship forsakes me—I lose all at once!—Ah, Diana, 'tis only you can calm the dreadful distress which deprives me of reason.—If you could see into my soul—you would shudder at what you have done.—That heart which you disdain, is perhaps not inferior to your own—but it is deeply wounded!—Dread those transports, which constraint and uncertainty render still more violent.—Dread the penetrating eye of love and jealousy!—

DIA. What has innocence to fear?—I may be grieved at your injustice; but I cannot be afraid.—What have I promised you? Have I deceived you?—Of what do you complain?

MAR. What an ascendancy you have over

me!—Must you still preserve it, even at the very time you deprive me of all hope!—[To Mrs. Dennison.] Ah! Madam! Ah Diana! have pity on a wretch who at least is worthy of your regard and friendship.

Mrs. DEN. I perceive your suspicions, and shall answer you with candour, Till this very moment I knew not the true sentiments of Diana; this conversation has opened my eyes: I believe as you do, that her heart is no longer free; but since it is given without my consent, she has not declared herself, and you may depend upon it, that he whom she prefers is still ignorant of her secret.

MAR. [oppressed] Ah, Heaven!

OVER. Can an involuntary inclination excite your resentment?

MAR. You knew then of this inclination? —an ungrateful treacherous friend dared to entrust you with it? —

OVER. You only are ungrateful when you doubt him!—The unhappy youth, consumed by the most violent passion, even denied himself the consolation of talking of it to me; I discovered his secret, but he had the virtue and the resolution to conceal it from her whom he adored.—He sacrificed his love and happiness to you without murmuring—and you accuse him!—you hate him! —

MAR. Is it possible that he should have such command over himself.---To see Diana every day, to love her, and be silent.---Ah, it that

is true, he deserves his happiness.---In fact---this very day, he would have set out with me, and quitted Diana !----He contended with sincerity !----Can I persuade myself of it !---Ah, Diana, I can believe only you.----Speak——you alone can convince me, and let me know my injustice?

DIA. [with mildness and timidity.] Your friend never spoke to me but of you.——I thought that friendship alone filled and occupied his heart---and he still believes that I love you.——This is the truth.

MAR. He believes that you love me!—Ah may he be recompensed for those torments which such a foolish mistake must have occasioned to him!---But I will no longer talk to you of an ill-fated passion, which henceforth can only serve to justify your hatred!——

DIA. My hatred!——What an unjust and cruel expression! ah, rather allow me to flatter myself, that my friendship, my sincere esteem, may one day comfort you.——Renounce a weakness which is unworthy of you.----That friend, who was so dear to you, has set you an example of courage and generosity; dare to imitate him; by equalling his virtue, you will cease to hate him; reconciled to yourself, and having become the object of our admiration, you will easily forget your sorrows, and your love.

MAR. What do I hear!——Ah, who can resist you?----Yes, I will justify your desires

and your hopes.---It is resolved, you have triumphed!---I resent not the happiness of Valentine.---Yes, I will do more.---I will have the courage to acquaint him with it.—Let him learn from my mouth—that he is beloved, and still preserves his friend.

DIA. Ah my Lord!---But mama---should I avow?-----

Mrs. DEN. I cannot but approve your choice, my girl, if Mr. Overford will consent.-----

OVER. Can you doubt of my answer and my joy!

DIA. Well then, tell your friend, that his disinterested friendship for you, and his affection for his worthy father, inspired the passion I have for him!---[She reaches out her hand to him.] And tell him likewise, that the excess of your generosity has compleated my happiness.

MAR. Your happiness!---It shall become mine; do not doubt it!---Diana!---you are in tears!---[He throws himself at her feet, still holding her hand.] Ah, do not pity me; you have raised me above myself!

S C E N E VI.

Mrs. DENNISON, DIANA, The MAR-
QUIS, OVERFORD, CLEANTES,
VALENTINE.

VAL. [observing the Marquis on his knees before Diana.] O heavens, what do I see!-- Where have you brought me?—By what cruel tyranny would you have me a witness!—Ah, let me fly!——

MAR. [rising, and running to stop him.] Stop, Valentine!——

VAL. All attempts to detain me will be in vain!——I bid you an eternal adieu—know then, all that I have suffered—Do not detain me longer---Know likewise that I am your rival!——

MAR. [embracing him.] Recognize your friend, and know your happiness;---Diana is yours!——

VAL. O God!——

MAR. She loves you!--Be happy, you deserve it, and let the hand of friendship unite you!——

VAL. Diana! ——— my friend! ——— is it possible!

CLE. What a happy change! ———

OVER. O my son, all my prayers are heard!

VAL. And you consent! ——— and Diana! ——— No, they deceive me, they abuse me! ——— O my Father! ———

Mrs. DEN. Speak, my girl! ———

DIA. [to Valentine.] When generous friendship has deigned to serve me for an interpreter, can you still preserve any doubts?

VAL. Diana, you love me! ——— Diana is mine! ——— But, gracious God! ——— thou dear, thou too feeling friend—what will become of thee? ——— Alas! I dare not yield to my transports! ——— You are unhappy; my happiness would be a crime! ——— What! have the torments I just now experienced become yours? ——— That idea distracts me, and poisons all my felicity? ———

MAR. Can you grieve for my fate, when I preserve a friend like you, and have obtained the esteem of Diana? The more painful the sacrifice, the more I ought to be pleased and proud of having made it! Ah, Valentine, you have too exalted a mind to be surprised at the power of reason, and to pity the heart which can triumph over itself? ——— Diana, Valentine, ye dear objects of all the affections of my soul, be happy, and I shall be so, by your means. ——— I have lost the frail illu-

fions of love, but friendship is still preserved to me ; my virtue is restored to me.——
These are the true sources of peace and happiness.

[The curtain drops.]

THE END.

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